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Herbert Marcuse

'Marcuse has made an important contribution to the history of ideas'

Times Educational Supplement

Allen Lane
The Penguin Press

Both to be published on 22 May

An Essay on Liberation

Is the restructuring of man possible? Marcuse believes it is; he sees in the uprising of French students in May 1968 the first powerful rebellion against existing society. The new sensibility has become a political fact, and in this he sees hope of the liberation of man. **An Essay on Liberation**, his latest book, is both concise and startling, and marks a new phase in Marcuse's thought.

25s

Eros and Civilization

When it was first published in the United States **Eros and Civilization** was quickly recognised as an important re-examination of Freud's thought. Marcuse is concerned not with a corrected or improved interpretation of Freudian concepts but with their implications: his purpose is to contribute to the philosophy of psychoanalysis, not to psychoanalysis itself. This essay moves exclusively in the field of theory, and keeps outside the technical discipline that psychoanalysis has become. The author's hope is to forward the development of theoretical construction which aims not at curing individual sickness but at diagnosing the general disorder.

50s

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David Astor

Why the Revolt against Hitler Was Ignored

On the British Reluctance to Deal with German Anti-Nazis

IN A RECENT article in ENCOUNTER [December 1968] entitled "Heroes and Suspects," Mr. Christopher Sykes has attempted to put the German opposition to Hitler in perspective. He has done so after several years study for a book[1] on Adam von Trott, one of the 20 July 1944 conspirators, who was later executed. Nevertheless, the few survivors of this plot who have read Mr. Sykes' interesting work do not altogether agree that he has understood their situation at that time.

First, I must declare my own interest. I knew Trott well and it was I who approached Mr. Sykes on behalf of Trott's widow and a few friends with the suggestion that he write about him. My purpose therefore is to indicate where their views—and my own—differ from his.

There is no disagreement about the courage of the German conspirators. The difference is about the nature of their political problem. It is also about the relationship of the British government and of British individuals to the German opposition. It is, therefore, in part about whether there is a British share of responsibility for a failure to prevent or shorten the war. I shall suggest that Mr. Sykes has not understood the position of the German conspirators and has not adequately examined the British side of this story: I shall also comment on his interpretation of Trott's role.

The main difference of view between the German survivors of the plot and Mr. Sykes is that the plotters believed, and still believe, that their conspiracy against Hitler always needed foreign cooperation to succeed. Mr. Sykes, on the other hand, has investigated their enterprise as if it was and should have been overwhelmingly a domestic German affair.

He sees that all the efforts which went into the 1944 attempt to kill Hitler produced little more effect than the gesture of the protesting Munich students two years earlier. He suggests that this lack of practical results explains why the German opposition has won less general respect than the resistance movements of other countries; and he seems inclined to accept this comparison and verdict.

But there are two fundamental distinctions between these cases. One is that resisting an occupation by foreign troops is—although perilous—altogether easier than opposing a dictatorship of your fellow-countrymen. In the latter case, you have the force of nationalism and cry of treason against you.

Moreover, resistance to foreign occupation can produce results through blowing up a bridge here, de-railing a train there. But the only effective internal opposition to a modern dictatorship (at least, in time of war) is the supremely difficult surgical operation of removing the government itself: it is a matter of all or nothing. Even to attempt this feat demands a far higher degree of political calculation than is needed in resistance to foreign occupation: it also calls for a different order of moral sophistication and courage.

THIS DISTINCTION in the inherent difficulties is so complete that it would be better if different

[1] *Troubled Loyalty*. By CHRISTOPHER SYKES. Collins, 45s.

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words were used for the two activities: *resistance* to foreign occupation and *opposition* to the dictatorship of your fellow-countrymen. The completeness of the distinction is underlined by events. All occupied countries produced effective resistance movements: but there was no effective opposition in any Axis dictatorship, including their satellites, Austria, Hungary and Rumania. Even Italy, with the least efficient dictatorship, produced no serious plot against Mussolini or effective partisan movement—until the Allied armies were there to give support.

The second—and equally fundamental—distinction concerns this matter of outside aid. The resistance movements in all occupied countries received substantial foreign help, both in arms and leadership from abroad. Even *rival* resistance movements—which occasionally conducted operations against each other—were helped simultaneously; for instance, in Greece and Yugoslavia.

By sharp contrast, in the case of the internal opponents of the enemy dictatorships (whose difficulties were much greater) there was almost no willingness to give help of any kind. To do so seemed to be considered "trading with the enemy"; only those "enemy" citizens willing to enlist as our spies or sabotage agents got any help or even much serious attention.

WHY THIS CONTRAST? It was not that the possibility of fostering opposition within the enemy dictatorships passed unconsidered. In the pre-war years, there were clandestine visits of emissaries of the German opposition. During the war, there were the contacts made by Trott and others with British embassies in neutral countries. Although the British government treated these messengers with extreme scepticism, they encouraged them to continue taking the high risks of making the visits. And, finally, there was the direct appeal to the British Foreign Secretary by Dr. George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, on behalf of his friends, Pastors Bonhoeffer and Schoenfeld, who had travelled to meet him secretly in Sweden in mid-war, representing their fellow-plotters.

As is well known, all these approaches led to nothing. (The bishop was not even allowed to transmit a message saying he had failed.) The only political activity that the British government undertook to foster division in Germany was a small amount of "black propaganda": broadcasts of prisoner-of-war grumbles—pretending to come from secret transmitters inside Germany—directed by the former Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Express*, with no relevance to the efforts of the German conspirators. The British parachuted some agents into Germany to help German Communists engaged in sabotage attempts; but this was more a military than a political act, as one effect of the intensity of the German-Russian conflict was that it severely limited any popular support in Germany for Communism at that time.[2]

Adam von Trott's Story

WHAT HAPPENED to make the efforts of the main German opposition—which was a loose coalition of all other parties from Social Democrats to conservatives—fail to get any cooperation from the Allies?

This is the question posed by the story of Adam von Trott, one of the men who acted as its spokesmen abroad. Trott's friends and relatives had hoped for a comprehensive study of this question from "both sides of the hill." They gave their source material to a British author because the British side of this story is more inaccessible than the German one and, in their view, of interest.

However, Mr. Sykes has not investigated the British side of this story with the same thoroughness that he has devoted to the German side. And the reasons for this are a sad reminder of the reasons why all attempts at cooperation between the German anti-Hitler plotters and the British anti-Hitler government came to nothing.

Like almost all the British officials of that time, Mr. Sykes seems to assume that the German opposition (unlike the resistance movements in occupied countries) ought to have been able to make a revolution without cooperation from abroad. He recognises that the plotters were not mainly generals; that no overthrow of Hitler was possible without the help of a large part of the Army and that this was not conceivable by a mutiny from below (the Communist dream of action "from below" never having any serious hope of success). He therefore sees that there was no alternative to trying to persuade some army commanders to act against their Govern-

[2] When I last spoke to Trott in July 1939, he still thought it possible that the German Communists would be part of a united opposition to Hitler. He shared with Cripps this hope of Communist-Social Democrat cooperation after most other anti-Nazis had abandoned it.

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ment. But—asserting that "as a matter of historical observation" successful revolutions are not preceded by a search for foreign support—he seems to assume that this feat of persuasion was possible without cooperation from abroad.

Mr. Sykes does not recognise that the German generals, like the generals of any other country, were not likely to act, however disillusioned, unless able to command the obedience of some of their troops and the approval of some of their public. In their case, this meant being able convincingly to represent themselves as rescuing their country from a terrible fate offered by Hitler retaining power. At different stages, this meant different things. In 1938, it meant saving Germany from becoming involved in another World War; in 1944 it meant getting Germany out of the war with less than a total collapse. But at all stages it meant that the plotters had to enable the generals to offer their fellow-Germans some lesser evil. The conspirators, therefore, needed evidence that Germany would suffer a less terrible fate if Hitler died. And to provide that evidence they needed foreign help.

Mr. Sykes fails to recognise either this or its corollary: the plotters' own inevitable concern to secure some reassurance for a post-Hitlerian Germany. To construct a persuasive case to put before sceptical generals, they were obliged to make political suggestions abroad which could and did arouse foreign suspicion of their own motives. Their sole hope of overcoming this enormous difficulty was retaining the trust of some British or American individuals who had the imagination to understand their situation and the capacity at least to try to influence their own governments' policies.

LIKE MANY OTHERS before him, Mr. Sykes disparages the German army commanders for having been (almost) unable to act without foreign political encouragement. He implies mysteriously that the generals of other nations have a tradition of "glorious revolution" and asserts that German officers are peculiar in being conditioned only to act against their own government in the event of an "impending military defeat." But what really shocks him—he talks of other people feeling "exasperation" on the point—is that the surviving plotters do not share this indignation against the generals. The survivors suffered heart-breaking disappointments through the hesitations of the generals and lost all their friends, executed by the Nazis: yet they still maintain that, under the circumstances, it was not surprising that the army commanders required some degree of foreign reassurance.

Moreover—and this seems particularly to annoy Mr. Sykes—surviving plotters insist that it was partly because Mr. Chamberlain gave way at Munich that by far the best chance of ridding the world of Hitler and preventing World War II altogether was missed when the Halder-Witzleben conspiracy failed during the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938. This was a plot to seize Hitler and put him on trial for leading Germany towards another World War. The suggestion that Mr. Chamberlain's Munich policy accidentally deprived the generals of the necessary pretext to strike down Hitler (namely, evidence that he was leading Germany into another World War—not, incidentally, towards "impending military defeat") seems to Mr. Sykes an "escapist legend." He seems to compare it to the notorious nationalist legend of the stab-in-the-back at the end of World War I, on which the Nazi movement itself was founded.

Mr. Sykes does not differentiate between the more extreme views of some survivors, such as the intrepid Fabian von Schlabrendorff, which would make Britain almost solely responsible for this failure to help prevent the war, and the more balanced view of others which would suggest that Chamberlain was only accidentally responsible. He lumps all these views together and attributes them to a specifically German proneness "to blame other people for their errors and mistakes": indeed, he senses in the plotters' attitude a respect for generals as "father figures in the modern folk-mythology of Germany." Now, these seem hard and perhaps facile judgments to pass on a small number of individuals who personally attempted to overthrow the fiercest government since Genghis Khan. But what matters is not whether these judgments are uncharitable: what matters is whether they are likely to be true.

COULD IT BE that even the most strikingly self-reliant members of the German opposition —men like Tresckow—were mistaken in thinking foreign encouragement essential? Could it be that even the least militarist and most internationalist of them—men like the Social Democrat, Julius Leber—were wrong in believing that this encouragement had to take the form of propositions which would enable the generals to represent themselves as guardians of their fellow-Germans? Is it really likely that

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British people, with no experience of dislodging a modern tyranny from within, would be—then or now—better judges of what was necessary than the people actually engaged in this effort? It seems improbable.

The Plotters

TURNING TO the personal role of Adam von Trott in this whole story, Mr. Sykes is, of course, right that Trott made a number of mistakes in the way he put his case in his many attempts to bridge the huge gulf of misunderstanding between the German opposition and the British and American governments. He was as fallible as the next man.

But a study of Trott could not, in any case, cover the whole story of the attempts by the German plotters to secure British help: it so happens that he was not engaged in these attempts during their most hopeful and vital phase before the war. In the years preceding the Halder-Witzleben plot of 1938, Trott—then still in his twenties—was far from the centre of oppositional circles: he was, first, a provincial civil servant in Kassel and, later, a post-graduate student in China.

He secured a special grant from the Rhodes Trust for this trip to China through a direct appeal to its secretary, Lord Lothian, a close friend of his and mine. His motive for wanting to go to China—which he confided fully to Lothian—was a desire to go far away to think out what should be his role in the highly unwelcome situation in which the Nazi dictatorship of his country had placed him as a liberal-socialist.

At that time, before Hitler had made it absolutely plain that he was going to resort to the military invasion of his neighbours, Trott's attitude could best be compared to that of a type of young man who is still relatively unknown in the West, an anti-Stalinist Soviet intellectual of today. Like such a Russian today, Trott hoped that the dangerous character of his country's régime could be changed without the disaster of a world war. But he did not accept that the Western democracies, with their capitalist economics and their still-functioning colonial systems, represented the last word in political purity and wisdom. He believed the West had something to learn from Socialist experiments—even including the Socialist aspects of Fascism. (His interest in the aims of the Soviet system was as serious as was his personal loyalty to his Communist elder brother: of Fascism, at best he hoped it might contain one or two marginally constructive aspects).

Finally, he hoped that a war between the western democracies and Fascist Germany might be avoided if these Powers could be involved in supporting peace in the Far East, where their interests might not clash. This hope, which now sounds like dangerous nonsense, nevertheless has an obvious similarity to the hopes of those who today believe that world peace may be maintained and Brezhnev's more extreme tendencies be mitigated or out-lived by Soviet-Western cooperation in areas like the Middle East or Viet Nam.

The evidence that this was Trott's attitude before the invasion of Prague is partly to be found in Mr. Sykes' book. For instance, he quotes him writing thus in a letter to Shiela Grant Duff (in which he shows an attitude that strangely resembles that of many young intellectuals today):

> "You do not really answer my reproach that perhaps capitalist and imperialist democracy uses liberty as a smoke screen for definitely coercive policies, whereas some aspects of "authoritarian" systems may mean a more straightforward assertion of the rights of man in modern industrial society than its radical opponents realise. With other words, the conflict of ideologies may really be quite unrepresentative of, and disguise the real nature of the conflict, which may be based on rival but not different ambitions! I do *not* agree that the rival dynamic of the European powers is ultimately incompatible and must result in the bloody victory of one ideology over the other."

He summarised one aspect of these hopes in the phrase "devising sounder solutions of the conflict between order and revolution than war."

What was peculiar about Trott was that, although so comparatively young, he felt a personal obligation to seek solutions of the greatest problems of his day. He was still in his twenties when he attempted to formulate his proposals for peaceful cooperation in the Far East. While Mr. Sykes, like others, is inclined to interpret all Trott's ideas as motivated mainly by German nationalism, there is evidence that his real motives were those of attempting peaceful compromise between rival ideologies. That evidence is that he received his financial backing for his sojourn in China, when he worked out these ideas, from two eminent Englishmen who

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were themselves exploring similarly bold lines of thought. These were Lothian, a life-long Liberal who developed his own original concepts of world affairs in his Burge lecture of 1935, and Sir Stafford Cripps, later to identify himself fully with anti-Colonialism and with the United Front between Social Democrats and Communists, which cost him expulsion from the Labour Party. These two men were among Trott's most intimate political friends and backers: and, whatever else they may have been, they were not sympathisers with German nationalism.

When Hitler entered the Sudetenland and smashed the last hopes of everyone except those who wanted war, Trott (who had hoped that Hitler might have been superseded, like Robespierre) wrote to a friend regretting that he had not admitted to himself the impossibility of living peacefully with Hitler already when he had seized Austria. He sent me an urgent letter from China (which unfortunately has not survived) declaring his—to me—hair-raising resolve to return to Germany to join fully in opposition activities and emphasising the importance of maintaining contacts with Britain in these efforts.

But he was still determined to work for the overthrow of the Nazi régime without war, if that was possible. His first-hand experiences in Manchuria had deeply impressed him that war meant precisely the spread of what the Nazis represented—heightened nationalisms, mass hatreds, the habit of violence. (The episode described in Mr. Sykes' book of what happened to Trott's younger brother and his Indian troops when they deserted to the French Maquis at the end of the war is a small example of exactly what he expected.)

Entering the strange field of unofficial or oppositional diplomacy only after Prague, when, as it now seems, the best hopes of overthrowing Hitler and averting a world war had already been lost, Trott faced obvious risks. To delay the outbreak of war at this late hour, so that the German plotters could prepare another coup, meant asking the Allies to confront Hitler with both threats and bribes. The Munich concessions had been an utter disaster for the German opposition; but, now, the opposition desperately needed some discussion about possible concessions—to gain time to mount another coup. Yet to suggest even a discussion of concessions after Prague was, inevitably, to risk arousing the worst suspicions.

Changing Attitudes

TROTT STAYED IN MY HOUSE in London in that summer of 1939. I had long talks with him and, like others fully in his confidence, know what his ideas were. It can, I think, be proved that his loyalties were totally anti-Nazi and his judgment was clouded with neither pacifism nor appeasement (in the pejorative sense) by demonstrating more clearly than Mr. Sykes has done who were among his closest British collaborators at that time.

But, first, let me offer one detailed recollection of a visit to the War Office in that ominous summer of 1939. I went to ask my only friend there, Robert Laycock, what I should do about a young colonel of the German General Staff, Gerhard von Schwerin, who had arrived in London unofficially and who was recommended to me by Trott. Schwerin (who is still alive) wished to communicate to the British government how he and his friends on the General Staff thought that Hitler might yet, perhaps, be deterred from launching immediately on a course that must lead to a world war, which he made clear they had no wish to fight on his behalf.

Their recommendations were no vague call for help. Nor were they requests for concessions to German nationalist ambitions. They were precise suggestions of what might yet convince Hitler that an invasion of Poland meant war, if that was indeed to be the Allied decision. They included the immediate sending of R.A.F. units to French airfields along the German frontier, British naval exercises off Danzig that summer ("He will scream, but that won't matter") and an invitation to Air Marshal Milch to see for his master, Hermann Goering, that British air power was more formidable than Hitler could be made to believe by lesser German witnesses.

I was taken to see a senior British intelligence officer to whom I outlined Schwerin's story. He replied in quiet, measured terms that I shall not forget. Reciting the German officer's Christian names in full, he said as follows: *"I know who this man is. And if you want to know what I think of his coming over here, at a time when our country's relations with his are as bad as they are today, I think it's a damned cheek."* It was a surprising response to a German who was asking nothing of us except that we should make our determination absolutely clear.

This single contact with an outpost of the British intelligence system, together with many conversations with British diplomats of the

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day, including our exceedingly wrong-headed ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, have made me suspect that the astonishing truth is that *no* serious attempts were made by British officials to explore the possibility of cooperating with the German opponents of Hitler in the years when to do so was relatively easy and might have been decisively important—1933 until the outbreak of war.

In those years one Englishman, though not an official, did take the trouble to explore some of these possibilities—John (now Sir John) Wheeler-Bennett. This distinguished scholar and man of independent means made himself the leading British authority on the German Army: he overcame the Englishman's traditional hate of German army officers and probably knew more senior ones personally than did any other Englishman at that time. Moreover, he was almost unique among foreigners in his imaginative understanding that many of them who were not Nazis had no hope of effectively acting against Hitler without foreign cooperation.

Wheeler-Bennett, a close friend of Lothian, became good friends with Trott. In the year preceding the war, they had long and intimate talks about the possibilities of cooperation with the German opposition. Their talks took place in England and Germany before the war; and in America after war had begun. By then Wheeler-Bennett was a British diplomatic official in the U.S. Such was the trust that had grown up between them that Wheeler-Bennett was party to arranging a secret meeting in a Washington hotel between Trott and his old friend Lothian, as British Ambassador to Washington, during wartime.

This meeting would surely never have occurred if Wheeler-Bennett had considered Trott to be politically dubious or if he had thought him the muddled thinker pictured in Mr. Sykes' book. Indeed, there is evidence that Wheeler-Bennett was in full agreement with Trott's general analysis at that time and shared his hopes. A letter from Trott to me, written from America in wartime, is only part of that evidence: the more substantial part is a memorandum Wheeler-Bennett drafted with Trott's collaboration and also his farewell letter to Trott.

Soon afterwards in 1940, Hitler made his dramatic European conquests and the new Churchill-led Government showed (as Trott had always expected) far less willingness than its predecessor to consider dealings with the German opposition. At this time the anti-German racism preached by Lord Vansittart went almost unchallenged in our public life and it would have required of Wheeler-Bennett exceptional moral courage and ability to stand on his own if he was to continue advocating the importance of cooperation with the German opposition.

Lothian having died, Wheeler-Bennett found himself without the moral support of his patron and back in London in a Foreign Office job. He did not contact me to co-ordinate our efforts, as he had led Trott to expect that he would. On the contrary, he later advised *against* offering specific encouragement to the German opposition and supported the "Unconditional Surrender" policy, which some consider fatally injured the German opposition's chances of success.

After the war, Wheeler-Bennett published his celebrated study of the German Army, *Nemesis of Power*.[3] In this highly patronising book, he denounced the German generals for their lack of moral courage, and castigated them, in a passage which Mr. Sykes reproduces, for abdicating their political judgment to that of Hitler once he was victorious (as, it might be remarked, some British scholars abdicated theirs to Churchill).

Throughout his book, Wheeler-Bennett omitted an account of his own close connections with the German opposition, including his original hopes of them and their confidence in him (of which Trott's wartime letter to me is a clear example). The references to Trott give the false impression that Wheeler-Bennett scarcely knew him.

The reasons why Wheeler-Bennett completely changed attitude during the war and decided to abandon the German opposition may not have been faint-heartedness: it could be that he became honestly convinced that the popular feeling in Britain and America in those years that all Germans were suspect was justified. Whatever the explanation, there can be no doubt that he was the British friend in whom Trott had the highest hopes and that those hopes were misplaced. Why this happened has never been explained by Wheeler-Bennett or enquired into by any other British writer.

One briton by passport (but he also held a German passport as his family business was in

[3] John Wheeler-Bennett, *Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics, 1918–45* (1953).

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Berlin) who understood Trott's position intimately and backed him loyally throughout was a rich young man called Wilfrid Israel. This exotic character, in appearance a little like the late Philip Sassoon, remained in Germany with unbelievable equanimity (despite having been interrogated by the *Gestapo*) arranging the exodus of individual Jews until the very last moment. He and Trott were friends over some five years. I heard them speak of each other and know their friendship was one of complete trust: one which must have helped each to find the courage to keep going in his own self-directed and lonely course.

In the early war days, Wilfred Israel had a small official research job and was stationed in Balliol College, Oxford. From this modest base, he showed more concern to re-establish communications with Trott than anyone else in England. I recall him telephoning me to make approaches to Sir Stafford Cripps on Trott's behalf as soon as Cripps returned from Moscow to join the government. Israel remained absolutely unshaken in his belief that Trott would not have altered his attitude after Hitler's victories and that it was of the highest importance that Britain should try to help him and his fellow conspirators.

That Wilfrid Israel maintained this view actively till his death not only shows him to have been a bolder man than Wheeler-Bennett and with a more independent mind. It also shows that, although it required these qualities to see the possibilities of cooperating with the German opposition, it was not necessary to feel any particular sympathy with German nationalist aims, which Wilfrid Israel could not conceivably have had. When he was killed in 1943, flying on a Zionist mission to Portugal, this most unquestionable witness to Trott's political *bona fides* was lost. But Israel's secretary, who worked closely with Trott in Berlin, still lives.

Incidentally, Mr. Sykes hazards a guess that the British Government was high-mindedly motivated against dealings with the German opposition after 1942 by Hitler's mass extermination of the Jews and the British use of this supreme atrocity in their propaganda. Yet I remember a war-time dinner in London when Dr. Chaim Weizmann complained to a large gathering with the greatest bitterness that this extermination was being deliberately concealed by the British Government (possibly for fear that pressure for more Jewish immigrants to Palestine might have produced Arab disorders among the long-stretched British lines of communication). And, since the war, the terrible charge has been made by Jewish spokesmen that the British declined to bomb the Auschwitz installations for mass extermination—the special plant and railway lines of approach—in spite of their urgent requests. The actual reasons for this terrible omission have never been given. But it suggests that concern for the Jews cannot be convincingly advanced as an explanation of the British reluctance to cooperate with the German opposition.

Nemesis of Power

NATURALLY, NOBODY CAN ANSWER with certainty the hypothetical question of what might have happened if there had *not* been this reluctance. But it shows a complete misunderstanding of the kind of cooperation that the plotters wanted when Mr. Sykes cites Lord Halifax's speech made after meeting Trott in the summer of 1939 and implies that the obvious inefficacy of this speech demonstrates how futile were the ideas and methods of the German opposition.

What they wanted throughout was an honourable conspiracy, particularly with Britain and America, aimed at preventing or shortening the war and overthrowing Hitler. This sort of honourable conspiracy was nothing new to European history: such conspiracies had frequently occurred in European wars before the 19th century, particularly in wars of religion (and I remember Trott saying just this). There is no doubt that such conspiratorial relationships would come into existence again tomorrow if there were ever a war between the Communist States and the West: the Communists would be utterly astonished if both sides did not engage in these respectable activities.

Mr. Sykes' idea that people who try to make revolutions do not precede their efforts by seeking foreign support is not only doubtful history: it is also at variance with what is going on or ought to be going on today (for instance, between various clandestine oppositions inside Greece and various other countries; and to say that is to tell the Greek Government nothing). Those who still cannot understand that the handful[4] of German conspirators needed the

[4] The number executed after the failure of the 20 July 1944 plot is estimated at 5,000.

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reassurance of acceptable minimum terms to encourage their Army commanders to overthrow the Nazi régime simply demonstrate that they can never have been anywhere near such an enterprise themselves.

WHAT REMAINS STRANGE is what seems to be a continuing British desire to belittle the German opposition, mock it as incompetent and pretend it was ultra-nationalistic. Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, reviewing Mr. Sykes' book in the *Sunday Times,* offers an example of this. He refers to Trott as "a devious German intriguer" who in 1940 was "more anxious to get rid of Churchill than of Hitler" and considers it a damaging revelation that Trott's official reports, intended for Nazi eyes, read that way.

British scholars also seem slow to take an interest in what their own established figures, like Wheeler-Bennett, were doing. In the same review, Professor Trevor-Roper dismisses an admirable book[5] by an American, Harold Deutsch, with the usual jibes of "learned and painstaking," but without mentioning that this book confirms the evidence earlier revealed by Professor Hans Rothfels of the extent of Wheeler-Bennett's active (and perfectly honourable, but now unadmitted) involvement with Trott in America after the outbreak of war. Wheeler-Bennett's comradely dealings with Trott at that late hour make it plain enough that Trott had Wheeler-Bennett's complete confidence. But it is left to this American scholar to express any surprise that Wheeler-Bennett later changed his account of his dealings with Trott in his own book. This could only create a false impression.

I also heard Dr. George Bell complain that he considered Wheeler-Bennett had seriously misrepresented his (Dr. Bell's) dealings with the German opposition in *Nemesis of Power* in a sense that belittled that opposition. Bell was a meticulously responsible person and said this in the presence of others.

NOBODY NEED BE ASTONISHED that Trott was misunderstood by many in Britain in the doom-laden atmosphere of summer 1939. He was acting in circumstances which made camouflage absolutely essential. In his attempts to avoid war and gain time for the plot against Hitler, he adopted attitudes which had to appear ambiguous. He also made the error of not fully assessing the extraordinary, almost traumatic change of national mood that occurred in Britain when Hitler shattered all hopes and illusions by seizing Prague with no excuse at all.

Many British people, in the weeks after Hitler entered Prague, changed attitude one hundred and eighty degrees from considering world war unthinkable to preferring it to any further compromise. In his desperate diplomatic endeavours on behalf of the German opposition at this final hour, Trott's use of the former appeasers of the so-called "Cliveden set" to approach members of the Chamberlain government incurred understandable suspicions: these people were almost hysterically loathed by many in Britain at that time and were mistakenly believed to have been deliberately pro-Nazi.[6]

But, today, more can be known. For instance, that Trott's report intended for Hitler after his week-end at Cliveden was typed by Wilfrid Israel's secretary and jointly composed by two of his closest conspiratorial friends, Peter and Christabel Bielenberg,[7] all of whom happen to be alive and here to be cross-examined—if anyone is interested.

It therefore seems to need explaining that suspicions of Trott's motives and those of his fellow-conspirators are still treasured in Britain, almost with eagerness. Does the insistence of some British scholars that the German opposition to Hitler looked so impenetrably ambiguous and appeared so futile indicate an embarrassment that we British failed altogether to respond to approaches which can now be seen to have deserved some response?

Incidentally, Mr. Sykes says towards the end of his book that Trott was sometimes tempted and sometimes resisted temptation "with imperfect success," which, I suppose, is true of everyone. The only occasion when I recall Trott expressing himself as tempted was after he had managed to have his private talks with both Chamberlain and Halifax in the summer of 1939. He, a vigorous twenty-nine-year-old, was a bit depressed by their air of exhaustion. He felt he knew how Britain could yet create cir-

[5] *The Conspiracy Against Hitler in the Twilight War.* Oxford University Press (1968), 65s.

[6] I am not implying that the British appeasers were other than tragically mistaken in their hopes or that their errors were excusable. Nor am I suggesting that Trott was necessarily wise in attempting to avert war through seeking to influence Chamberlain, rather than attempting to convert Churchill to take a positive interest in the German opposition.

[7] See Christabel Bielenberg, *The Past is Myself.* Chatto & Windus, 36s.

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cumstances that might enable the German opposition to displace Hitler with Britain's co-operation. ("He is like a drunkard with a loaded revolver. You and we must take him, one by each arm, on a long talkative walk—all the way to Tanganyika if necessary—and then knock him on the head with his own revolver!") Frustrated that he could not make these elderly gentlemen understand the role he thought they should play, he jokingly said he felt inclined to seek British citizenship and enter British politics, as citizens of Ancient Greek city-states sometimes changed from one warring city to its adversary to pursue their argument from a different position. But this temptation to emigrate, which he and I had discussed at intervals ever since Hitler came to power when we were up at Oxford, never shook his feeling of obligation to oppose Nazism from within. He said there were many more able *émigrés*, who could do whatever could be done from outside Germany, than there were people willing and able to oppose Hitler from within; this, he thought, was the most vital need.

THE GENERAL THESIS of Mr. Sykes' book, that Trott only reached an unequivocally anti-Nazi attitude half-way through the war, makes a dramatic story: and it is a comforting thesis for those in Britain who, in varying degrees, misjudged or abandoned him. But there are major items which cannot be reconciled with this thesis. One is that the people most directly concerned, the German plotters themselves, never doubted Trott. The survivors of the plot consider Mr. Sykes' thesis a travesty of their experience of him.

This may not impress those who are sceptical of all and any German evidence. But there are two items of non-German evidence that cannot possibly be made to fit the thesis that Trott only became fully anti-Nazi half-way through the war. Those items are Trott's intimate political association throughout the months preceding the war with two men whose anti-Nazi attitude cannot be questioned: Wilfrid Israel and John Wheeler-Bennett.

Neither of these men would have trusted Trott if they had not been sure his attitude was as anti-Nazi and non-appeasing as their own. Both had enough first-hand dealings with him to judge his attitude with certainty. And there is no reason to suppose his attitude changed between his last meetings with them and his death.

The evidence of their trust during those very months when most doubt has been thrown on Trott's loyalties is more solid than interpretations of his letters to women friends or than, for instance, the (to me) unconvincing remark of the lady who suggested that his attitude to the Slavonic people at the end of the war was not altogether different to that of the Nazis.

It is only possible to sustain the idea that Trott was a muddled nationalist because Wilfrid Israel is dead and Wheeler-Bennett turned his back on the evidence of his own past. But the evidence of their support in 1939 is cast-iron and the only interest that is served by playing it down that I can see is a dubious British nationalist interest in shifting all possible blame for misunderstanding at that time off British shoulders and on to German ones.

The question of the German opposition's attitude to nationalism and of Trott's personal attitude to this emotion—which it is agreed is a different and less honourable one than the purely defensive emotion of patriotism—has been much debated. In discussing his views before the war he once used an image which may help to make his position clearer. He said that, when confronted by the deadly phenomenon of Nazism, he thought that the rivalries between one national culture and another, like the disputes between Catholics and Protestants or between capital and labour, should be seen as contests of tennis players when suddenly confronted by a man with a machine gun. "We must find a way of combining against him and of overpowering him: then we can get on with our various games of tennis, which we have gradually learned through the centuries to play without hitting each other!"

He and his friends succeeded in creating their domestic coalition of Hitler's German adversaries; but they failed to relate this in any way to the coalition of Hitler's external enemies—the defenders of the national cultures of Germany's neighbours. That Trott respected all those cultures is, to my certain knowledge, beyond doubt. I believe his basic loyalty was to humanity and to decency—as was the basic loyalty of another friend of mine, George Orwell,[8] also a lover of his own national culture

[8] Trott and Orwell never met, but had one close friend and patron in common, R. H. Tawney.

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and a patriot, but primarily a humanitarian and an internationalist.

FINALLY, I SUBMIT that it is doubtful that he could have approached the ordeal of his execution with such extraordinary composure if his loyalties had recently been troubled. It is hard to believe he could have achieved such calm unless both his patriotism and the internationalist idealism that had earned him the devotion of many distinguished non-Germans had not long been based on an unusual degree of inner unity. Personally, I believe inner unity had always been the source of his energy and influence on others.[9]

My chief concern, however, is not to argue with Mr. Sykes' personal estimate of Trott. Although, along with some of Trott's other friends, I think that Mr. Sykes' beautifully written and obviously sincere book over-emphasises the traditionalist and conservative side of Trott's outlook, which Mr. Sykes himself understands most easily, my purpose is to try to draw attention to a larger issue.

It is this. Surely, it was always as much in the interests of Britain as in those of the German opposition to find a way of cooperating against Hitler. The German opposition greatly desired this cooperation. There is today no doubt that that opposition had the potential support of many German generals; until his arrest, it had the astonishingly audacious support of the head of the German counter-intelligence service, Admiral Canaris. There was never any lack of fearless messengers, military, civil, and clerical; if the British Government did not wish to deal with Trott, they could have dealt with someone else whom they trusted more, such as Bonhoeffer. (Trott's only possibily unique qualification was his permission to go frequently abroad, which he engineered for instance through the pretence of conducting business for the Indian nationalist, Subhas Chandra Bose.) And there was, also, more than one man willing to make assassination attempts. So we now know for sure that the German opposition was worth taking seriously.

[9] That Trott and his friends went into a plot involving such obvious risks of unimaginable physical suffering without giving time or thought to equipping themselves with suicide pills is a measure of their extreme commitment, by contrast with the half-heartedness of many abroad on whom they had placed hopes.

The Share of Responsibility

THAT NO ACTIVE British interest was shown in the approaches of these men until the very last moment in 1944 seems to merit more surprise than it has yet evoked in Britain. It appears ludicrously out of proportion that so much British scholarly discussion still centres around the personal attributes of one individual, Trott—as if we British were solely dependent on him to achieve for us what we ought in our own interests to have tried to achieve for ourselves: namely, making active contact with this opposition.

Any serious investigation of the British end of this story might be unflattering to us. Nobody here did anything very useful in this matter, and others besides Wheeler-Bennett changed attitude. It would reveal a parochial and nationalistic British outlook at that time. The famous Oxford wit who till comparatively recently used to call Trott "one of the few Nazis to be hanged" would appear a little less than wise. The futility of the *émigrés* would make a sad story. But, in particular, the members of our diplomatic and intelligence services, who compiled a damning dossier on Trott without ever interrogating his friends, me among others, (let alone making any use of us) would be shown to have been guilty of an astonishing lack of open-mindedness.

It is only fair to say that the American side of these dealings seems to have beeen equally unsatisfactory. The entourage of Roosevelt was no more imaginative in its attitude to the German opposition than that of Churchill: and those few individuals who raised their dissident voices in America failed to get anybody influential to listen in the extraordinary atmosphere of those times.

One last anecdote of a non-event. When I was posted to Admiral Mountbatten's headquarters in 1941, he sent for me and said that his security officer had warned him I still retained contact with my German friends (meaning, presumably, many *émigrés* like Schumacher and Sebastian Haffner). I murmured that I was proud I did: and he replied forthrightly, "You're perfectly right." I have since sometimes thought that, if I had been able to introduce to him an official expert on German affairs, in touch with the latest developments and who had remained responsive to the German opposition, such as Wheeler-Bennett would have been had he not changed attitude, Mountbatten would

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very probably have had the temerity to raise the whole issue of the German opposition in the Chiefs of Staff Committee to which he belonged. It is a "might-have-been" notion that might conceivably have shortened the war by its last most murderous year.

Any serious study of what happened—or failed to happen—between Britain and the German opposition would, naturally, be a difficult undertaking. What "deals" might have been negotiable at different stages would be hard to establish, as no negotiations ever occurred (as far as I know). After the Soviets became our allies, there was a fear that Stalin—even though he himself sponsored a "National Free Germany Committee" with a field-marshal and a general on it—might make a second deal with the Nazis if we were discovered talking to Hitler's German adversaries. This possibility would obviously be hard to assess. But these are not reasons to accept what happened as inevitable and beyond enquiry or discussion.

Naturally, such a study—a very different work from that undertaken by Mr. Sykes—is made harder by British official unwillingness to open our archives as freely as the Americans have done. However, if the enquiry is delayed too long, all the remaining witnesses and participants (Anthony Eden, for instance) will be gone. And, until it is done, there must be an appearance of white-washing about all British studies of this painful subject.

It is painful because it involves the possible admission of some British share of responsibility, even if only passive responsibility, for terrible events. But unwillingness to investigate whatever may have been our share suggests the continuation of a partly-unconscious nationalistic British attitude that was itself the cause of our inability to make common cause with any of Hitler's German adversaries. As most of them paid with their lives for the mistakes that were made, they at least deserve that what happened should be fully faced and its lessons considered.

After all, the world remains divided between national and ideological groups with little communication between some of them. The division between Israel and the Arabs is a comparatively small current example: the semi-isolation of Russia and almost complete isolation of China are greater examples with even more formidable possibilities of trouble for the future. We should be warning the younger generations of the dangers of a lack of communications between national and ideological compartments of this kind. But this cannot be done if we are not prepared to tell the truth about the past.

Zen Testament

To the chrysanthemum
I leave this old, sick mind;

To that painting of blue grapes,
Whose tendrils are entwined
So cleanlily, I leave
My mess of tangled cares;

And to some lengthier poem
These time-distempered hairs.

A Korean *sijo* by *Kim Su-jang*
translated by Graeme Wilson

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Millicent G. Dillon

Induce

"DISORDER is ordure to me," Dr. Mehrtens often said. So he grouped his patients in two sets: He saw ten-minute patients in the afternoon and hundred-minute patients in the morning.

His wife, Lila, was in charge of office garbage in the morning. From seven until twelve she waited in a room behind his office for a sliding mahogany panel to open and for the garbage to appear, sealed in a heavy paper bag. Lila had to tie the bag with green plastic tape and take it downstairs and burn it in their backyard all-weather rust-resistant trash burner. Then she came upstairs and waited for the panel to open again.

Lila was delighted to be the wife of a doctor and to take out the office garbage, but there were many things in life that puzzled her. For instance, why was Lester no longer interested in lovemaking? And why, every night, did he insist that his hairless Mexican dog get under the covers between them. She was sure the dog purposely kicked her and every night she complained to Lester.

"Probably you provoke her," he would say, turning on his side with his back to her. So the three of them lay: Lester on his side, the dog cuddled up to him, and Lila huddled alone at her edge of the bed. One thing I absolutely will not do, she told herself, is cuddle up to that Mexican dog.

Soon the cold air crept between the bedclothes and drained the heat out of her feet, even though she wore white ankle socks. She thought about getting an electric blanket, but what if the dog's nails clawed through the outer covering, couldn't there be a short? She'd once read about a young couple in England who'd been electrocuted by their blanket on their wedding night.

She tried warming herself with reveries. She imagined herself in the hothouse in the Botanical Gardens, where she walked every afternoon. She was free to go anywhere in the afternoons because Miss Prisk was in charge of the office after twelve. Miss Prisk was a registered nurse, who kept the files in order and the magazines on the table and the patients waiting. Lila assumed she took care of the afternoon garbage.

Miss Prisk was young and smilingly metallic. She would probably ring hollow if you hit her. Obviously, men thought she was attractive, but how could they stand that coldness? And those nostrils? Miss Prisk's nostrils flared as if she had just, one moment before, smelled a puzzling odour. The skin inside her nose showed pink and harsh.

Lila shivered. To distract herself from Miss Prisk, a cold conception if there ever was one, she began to name the plants in the Botanical Gardens: Pansy, phlox, petunia, pyracantha—Lila stopped. She had run out of names. If she were Lester, she would have known them all. Lester often grew angry with her and the world as a whole for what he called a lewd urge to generalise, when what was important, he insisted, was attention to detail. "Induce," he often said, "don't deduce." She wasn't quite sure what

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that meant, but it certainly sounded impressive. It was nice to be married to a clever man.

ONE MORNING, when Lila was in front of the trash burner, about to open the door, a sudden gust of icy rain soaked her sneakers. Hurriedly, she put the bag on the ground and ran back into the house to get her boots that were lined with orlon pile. She was on her way out again when she decided she might as well defrost the veal for dinner and, at the same time, make herself a nice cup of chocolate. The cocoa was warming her from top to bottom —she could almost feel it in her toes—when she heard a terrible noise. Something or someone was hurtling down the back stairs. She ran outside. There was Lester, throwing the sodden bag into the furnace.

"But, dear, what's the matter?" Lila asked.

Lester bent down, opened the burner door, checked the blaze and shut the door quickly. The rain was streaming down his face and dripping through his moustache, yet he licked his lips as if they were dry.

"But, dear, what's so bad about the garbage getting a little wet?"

Lester took off his glasses and wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. "Disorder is ordure to me," he said. Then he ran back into the house to his hundred-minute patient.

Lila lingered in the back yard. There was something exciting about being unprotected in a cold driving rain. She leaned into the wind and tasted the rain on her tongue. But when she felt the rain dripping into her boots, she went back into the house into the room behind Lester's office. Sitting in a blue wing chair, she decided, My life is not what life should be. All right, so my husband is a doctor and all he asks of me is that I do the housework and the cooking and take care of the office garbage in the morning. Still, there is something that I've never had, something that I know is there, somewhere.

She took off her boots and white ankle socks and began to massage her toes. But she could not get them warm. Instead, her hands grew cold. It is not nice, she thought, not nice of Lester to talk to me the way he did. It is not considerate. It is not considerate because he is not considerate. Has he ever taken me to Europe? Has he ever bought me a mink coat? Why should I have less than other women? He is making a sop of me and I let him. What's more, I thank him for doing it.

SHE FELT a great impulse to kick something. She wanted to kick that hairless Mexican dog. She watched as one cold foot of its own will suddenly and vengefully lashed out. Yes, it is true, he is making a sop of me. She thought of that hairless Mexican dog spending her days lying on a purple corduroy pillow. Every time the dog shifted, the two tags and the golden key hanging from her collar clinked against each other. One tag said, "Number 243, expires June 30, 1969." The other tag said, "My name is Hamar Bageley." Lila had once asked Lester, "What is that key around Hamar Bageley's neck?" He had answered, "Neither natural nor sharp, can't you see it's quite flat, also plaintive. You've heard of the power of the keys (she hadn't). One might call this the key to power."

As Lila tucked her cold feet under her, the image of that little golden key loosed itself from some great log jam and flowed freely across the surface of her mind, looking for a lock. Another image floated by it: the trunk in the basement that had belonged to Lester's Uncle Albert, who was killed in the Great War. The two images clutched each other in a great spasm and Lila knew, she knew that the golden key fit the lock to Uncle Albert's trunk.

And, indeed, she was right. The key, deftly slipped from Hamar Bageley's collar, fit into the lock and turned easily. Lila lifted the lid. Inside were many green plastic bags tied with red paper-covered wire. She had seen bags like these in the supermarket. They were "Heavy Duty Bags—to keep your garbage spanking clean." Lila opened one

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bag and saw what appeared to be neatly wrapped Romaine. Looking again, she saw it was neatly wrapped money. She counted the money: ten thousand dollars in one bag alone. She counted the money in the other bags. Twenty-one bags, each filled with the same amount of money. "My goodness," she said.

She put the money back in the bags and retied the red wire tapes. But one tape had become twisted and when she put it back in place she pierced her finger. Drops of blood fell upon the floor and on the golden key. She ran upstairs and got the Mr. Kleen and erased all traces of blood. Thank goodness, she thought, as she slipped the key back on to Hamar Bageley's collar.

WHEN THEY SAT DOWN to dinner that night, Lila was very nervous. True, the white wine had been chilled exactly four hours on the lowest shelf of the refrigerator, and the French bread had been heated in a 325 degree oven for eight minutes, and the veal scallopini had been served on heated plates, all exactly as Lester had instructed. But she could not pay attention to dinner, she was so anxious to say something to him about discovering the money. Not that she wanted him to think she was spying on him. But she wanted him to be proud of her for putting two and two together and getting twenty-one bags full.

"Lester," she said, "I have been thinking."

"Please pass the noodles," he said. She watched him as he spooned them out slowly and ate in silence. She would have to take another tack.

"Lester," she said, "what is that key around Hamar Bageley's neck?" He finished eating, drew a cigar from his pocket and blew perfectly round smoke rings.

"It is the key to the infantesimal," he said.

"The what?"

"The infinitesimal. I-N-F-I-N-I-T-E-S-I-M-A-L." He spelled it out resentfully.

"But I thought you said—"

He interrupted. "Others may prefer to occupy themselves with the maximum forces in the universe. My way to truth is through minuteness, to penetrate to the border of life itself, to the edge of life and non-life, in short to the beginning of infanty."

"Of what?"

"What's the matter with you tonight? Have you lost your hearing? Of infinity. I-N-F-I-N-I-T-Y. Visualise, if you can, the circle of infinity, of life going from minuteness to maximality to minuteness again." He removed the band from the cigar, tore it and twisted the ends together. "Moebius," he muttered.

Lila sniffled. Often when Lester talked like this, she felt she was getting a cold in the head. "What'd you say? Maybe?"

"No endearments," he shouted, "particularly diminutives." He smoothed his moustache and stood up. He seemed calmer. "Tonight," he said, "I think I'll take Hamar Bageley for a walk." He whistled and Hamar Bageley jumped off the purple corduroy pillow. "Get your leash," Lester coaxed.

Hamar Bageley trotted into the kitchen and returned with the leash in her mouth. "You can't tell me dogs don't think," Lester said. He attached the leash to Hamar Bageley's collar and the two of them went out with the leash quite slack between them.

He certainly gets himself all worked up over nothing, Lila decided, as she climbed into the cold bed. A little "maybe" and he's off to the races. But does he ever get mad at Hamar Bageley? Not likely. I should have kicked her, after all. It's my own fault for being such a sop. And he still doesn't know I know about the money. Where did he get all that money, anyway?

IT WAS TIME to think things through. No longer could images just slide by, to be picked up by chance. From now on she would channel her thoughts, she would choose their direction. She was going to be mistress in the house of her own mind.

She lined up the facts in orderly sequence: The money was in the trunk. The key to the

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trunk was around Hamar Bageley's neck. Lester was no longer interested in lovemaking. All right, that much was clear. Now the question: Where did Lester get all that money? She had to admit that she didn't have an answer. There was only one thing to do, use Lester's weapons, turn his own devices against him. "Induce," she told herself, "don't deduce."

Warmed by her new plan, she began to drift into sleep. Then Lester and Hamar Bageley came back from their walk and got into bed. And there she was with the cold draught sapping her warmth. She summoned up flowers: Pansy, phlox, petunia, pyracantha, madly thrusting out stiff shoots covered with thorns and getting who-knew-what birds drunk on her nectar in the fall. . . . Maybe Miss Prisk had something to do with that money. No, that wasn't possible. But the thought was enough to keep Lila awake the rest of the night.

Instead of going to the Botanical Gardens the next afternoon, Lila slipped into Lester's waiting room.

"Can I help you, Mrs. Mehrtens?" Miss Prisk asked from behind her desk.

"I'm looking for something," Lila said, trying to avoid looking down the slope of Miss Prisk's nostrils. "A little thing, almost nothing at all."

Hoping to find a clue to the money in the trunk, she stared at the patients: coughing thin old men, stout middle-aged ladies, mothers holding babies and yelling at their older children, "Sit down, don't touch anything. Be good, or I'll give you a smack. Here, read this comic book." She recognised most of the afternoon patients from the neighbourhood. But the morning patients, the hundred-minute patients that she spied on next day in the waiting-room were not from the neighbourhood. Most of them were young with soft, dewy eyes as if they were in a dream. If they noticed Lila looking at them, they blushed. And all of them were women.

Now she had facts, now she could induce.

She tried to induce standing, she tried to induce sitting, she even tried it lying down. She decided the best position was lying down. With the body quiet, the mind could work freely.

She realigned the information: the key around Hamar Bageley's neck, the money in the trunk, no love-making from Lester, the different sizes and shapes of the ten-minute patients, the remarkable sameness of the hundred-minute patients. Suppose the money in the trunk came from the ten-minute patients. But how could that be? Only last year Lester received an award from the neighbourhood businessman's association, or was it the AMA, for voluntary and charitable care of the local poor. But all the locals were poor (Lester insisted on living in a poor neighbourhood, not quite poor enough for redevelopment, but poor, nevertheless; he said that only in this way could one stand on the threshold of life.), and all the afternoon patients were locals. No, the money could not come from the ten-minute patients.

Suppose, then, that the money came from the hundred-minute patients. Lila could find no thoughts to channel in this direction. But suddenly down the surface of her mind flowed a narrow, dark and shadowy boat. And on the deck of that uninhabited boat she saw a box. And in that box she saw a load of steaming fertiliser, brown, hot and moist. She sensed a peasant standing against the sky, sowing seed, while birds sang and bees buzzed and—she knew. Those hundred-minute patients, those women not from the neighbourhood, those women with their dreamy eyes, were paying Lester not for his bedside manners but for his bed manners. She jumped up, she would not believe it. But look at the evidence. She lay down on her back again. See how they blush when I come in and no wonder he is no longer interested in lovemaking. About all he can do at the end of the day is go for a walk with Hamar Bageley. No wonder. And all that talk about order and the physical universe and infinity and the infinitesimal, it's all a great big cover-up. Here she had cooked for him, slaved for him, taken out the office garbage for him in the morning and this was

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her reward for devotion. She was so angry she had to get up. Let him get someone else to do the morning garbage for him, one of those hundred-minute patients.

She went to the bedroom, climbed on a chair, got her suitcase down from the closet and began to pack. She had never been anywhere before, but now she was going everywhere. She dressed in an antron and nylon dress that could be washed and dried in three hours in a dry climate, and reminded herself to buy a portable clothesline.

DOWNSTAIRS Hamar Bageley was snoring on the purple pillow. Lila snatched the golden key from her collar and ran down to the cellar. But she could not maintain her rage. She sat on the floor and wept. He's not all bad, she thought. He does have ten-minute patients and he even has a certificate proving that he's charitable. She had no choice about leaving. After what Lester had done she would have to leave, but she would not take all the money. She would share it with him. She made two piles, she counted one for him and one for me and one for him and one for me. But there was one bag left over. Remembering the nursery rhyme, she made three piles. One for him and one for me and one for a welfare charity.

It took her four trips upstairs to get the two piles of money, for herself and the charity, packed in the suitcase. It was already five o'clock, an hour late for starting Lester's dinner. She ran into the kitchen, checked the wine in the refrigerator, took the baby beef liver and spaghetti and tomato sauce out and put them on the counter, rushed into the dining room to set the able and stopped with a spoon in the air. Why, she thought, I'm still a slave to him. Even now I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, worrying about his details. I'll careful-attention-to-detail him.

She ran through the waiting room past Miss Prisk, that pyracantha, too stiff with surprise to move, into the supply room and snatched a glass jar, big enough to make pickles, from the shelf. Back in the kitchen she poured three bottles of red wine—Lester liked his red wine chilled—into the glass jar and dumped the baby beef liver, sliced paper-thin, in afterwards. Then she threw in the spaghetti and tomato sauce. She carried the jar to the dining room table, left it at Lester's place, rushed into the kitchen again, tore a note from her printed shopping list, bypassed the column for meats and vegetables and wrote under "Notions": "Induce, don't seduce." She propped the note up against the jar, called a taxi and left with her luggage.

"Please take me to the nearest foundlings' home," she said to the cabbie. "I have a little something for them, seven bags full."

And he thinks only dogs think, she told herself, as she rolled down the window. She was too hot for the first time in years.

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C. H. Rolph

A Backward Glance at *The Age of "Obscenity"*

THE POLICE and the Lord Chamberlain have never done very well in any attempts to enforce obscenity laws against the theatre, and no doubt this is why they haven't tried very hard. The Lord Chamberlain's control, which began in 1737 (and that of his predecessor, the Master of the King's Revels), was the more effective, for it exercised a "pre-publication censorship" even more rigorous than the licensing system for books and newspapers, whereas the police have always seemed more out of place in the most ribald of theatres than they do even in a bookshop. In the opening years of the 18th century the effect of Jeremy Collier's denunciations was still being widely felt, and there were prosecutions of stage companies for putting on John Crowne's ineffably boring satirical comedy *Sir Courtly Nice, or It Cannot Be*, Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (perhaps because Corvino prostitutes his wife in pursuit of the inheritance—it's hard to find another reason) Congreve's *Love for Love*, and Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife*. All these prosecutions failed, as they assuredly would today, when the plays involved are widely considered narcotic rather than aphrodisiac or debasing.

But the object of the Act of 1737 was mainly political—its preamble said it was to restrain "the political and personal satire" then prevalent on the stage. It set up the Office of Examiner of Plays, whose last holder has only just relinquished powers of censorship. (He has, only too willingly, gone out with the Theatres Act of 1968.) The 1737 Act gave the Lord Chamberlain total freedom of action—he banned what he liked or perhaps, since his word was absolute, what he didn't like. (It was not until the Theatres Act of 1843 that his duties were particularised and his decisions thus made susceptible to challenge.) There was even more freedom for the creative writer in plays written merely to be privately and indeed secretly read; and it was not long, accordingly, before their form gave place to that of the novel.

ONE MORE PLAY, *another Swedish film or two, the latest profusely illustrated volume from the Grove Press in New York—and we will have lost all meaningful touch with past centuries. What were the dark ages of "obscenity" like? As John Weightman observed last month, "The Super-Ego is out," and public artistic and cultural life increasingly takes on the character of a "saturnalia." Is it only a modish mood, or is it permanent? May there not well be a nostalgia one day soon for the good old days of "shadows and hidden corners"? And—who knows—a youthful movement of rebellion may even arise to indict a totally profane society for alienating everybody from their immemorial humane rights to private repression and personal frustrations. Already there are militant rumblings to be heard: "Who robbed us of our profanity? Who expropriated our dark dreams? Give us back our four-letter words!..." The disenchantment with the Pornotopian revolution may soon be beginning to set in, in part backlash and in part self-flagellation.*

These glimpses out of the past by C. H. Rolph will be included in his new history of literary censorship, Books in the Dock, *shortly to be published by André Deutsch.*

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Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe* was a seven-volume warning about "the distress that may attend misconduct both of parents and children in relation to marriage," and was a kind of moral sequel to *Pamela,* the first English "novel of character" (it came out in 1747 and 1748). Walter Allen, who was among those helping the Society of Authors' Committee in its campaign against the obscenity laws in 1954–59, is in no two minds about *Clarissa Harlowe,* though he is utterly opposed to censorship in all its forms. In *The English Novel* (1954), he says that Robert Lovelace's erotic treatment of Clarissa is pornography. Compared with it, he thinks, "the obscenity of Smollett and the indecency of Sterne, so often rebuked by the righteous, appear innocent." I recall this because of its interesting implication that, in Mr. Allen's view, pornography is rather worse than obscenity or indecency, which can appear innocent by comparison with it. Mr. Geoffrey Gorer thinks it is rather better.

Less innocent perhaps but certainly better known are the amorous adventures of *Tom Jones, A Foundling,* which appeared over the name of Henry Fielding in the following year (1749). Many a modern author whose novel has got him into Court at Bow Street has savoured the irony in the fact that Fielding was appointed Magistrate there in the year before *Tom Jones* was published. Fielding was an old Etonian lawyer-playwright-pamphleteer, and it was he and Richardson who established the form of the English novel. Tom's romping career was much criticised at the time, the affair that gave the most offence being his conquest of Lady Bellaston, to whom he becomes a kind of short-term gigolo. But there was little squeamishness about, and Tobias Smollett and Lawrence Sterne, no less than Richardson and Fielding, can be readily acquitted of any charge that their stories were but a primitive framework for a saga of seduction and copulation (which is what the prosecution said *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was). Such an accusation might more truly be levelled at John Cleland's *Fanny Hill, or the Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,* which also appeared in 1748; and it is doubtful that he would have attempted to repudiate it. He might well have been surprised if he could have lived to read the publisher's assurance in an edition daringly—and disastrously—published in London in 1963 that "many eminent" (though anonymous) "men of letters consider that, in its own right, it is a magnificent work of literature." This recommendation goes on to say that "no true picture of the literature of the 18th century would be complete without a study of this book." In 1963 many studies of 18th-century English literature began and ended with it. "A skilful piece of craftsmanship, superior in style and elegance to most of the erotic publications of our own day," wrote Louis Untermeyer, the American critic; and, when you come to think of the erotic publications, he could have said at least that again.

The other best-known blue book of the 18th century was *The List of Covent Garden Ladies,* compiled and published by a Mr. Harris in 1780 in order to supply a channel of advertising for London prostitutes. The fact that he was not prosecuted and that his ladies' directory remained widely accessible may have raised false hopes in the heart of Mr. Frederick Charles Shaw, a publisher of Greek Street, Soho, when he decided to publish his famous *Ladies' Directory* in 1959—and became one of the first to test the new Obscene Publications Act. The more the erotic appetite changes, the more it remains the same.

Pornography or Obscenity?

HERE A FRESH ATTEMPT must be made to define pornography. The Act of 1959 actually uses the word in its "long title," but the long title to a statute is not (yet) any part of the law and its words do not call for definition:

> An act to amend the law relating to the publication of obscene matter; to provide for the protection of literature; and to strengthen the law concerning pornography.

But the word does not appear in the text of the Act. "Obscene" does, and "literature"; and Sir Alan Herbert wanted it called the *Protection of Literature Act*—he drafted a Bill of his own to show what he meant, and I hope his biographer is preserving it among the more delightful of the *APH* memorabilia. The late Lord Birkett, Q.C., offered a definition in an essay written in 1961:

> The essence of pornography I take to be the deliberate excitation of sexual feelings; but a book can be obscene, it is said, without any such deliberate purpose.

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Yet the deliberate excitation of sexual feelings is the purpose of most fashion design, at least for women; of much of the world's greatest art; of the cosmetics industry; and, it appears, of the pictorial advertising for most commodities and services from toothpaste to North Sea gas.

> Pornography [said the late Sir Herbert Read] is a social problem. It is a commodity brought into existence by certain characteristics of a highly developed civilisation.... But a *graphic* activity is involved. Whether in literature or in the plastic arts the desired effect is gained by the use of *images*.

Mr. Geoffrey Gorer remarks that since pornography is an aspect of literacy, it is confined to the higher civilisations:

> It is not a human universal, found in societies of every stage of development as is obscenity.... Despite the title of the Obscene Publications Bill, the connections between obscenity and pornography are both tenuous and intermittent. In Latin literature such writers as Juvenal and Martial used the complete obscene vocabulary without, apparently, being considered pornographic.... Conversely, to the best of my recollection *Fanny Hill* (one of the few masterpieces of English pornography) does not use a single obscene term.

Mr. Gorer's definition of pornography is of a clarity that I do not remember to have seen equalled. He ends by saying that "in its most usual form it is a fiction, in prose or verse, narrative or dialogue, mainly or entirely concerned with the sexual activities of the imagined characters." Dr. Robert Gosling sees it as

> erotic material whether visual or verbal that is believed to have a corrupting influence, rightly or wrongly in the event.... Alternatively, one might define it as all the visual material that at the present time and in a particular society is judged by the authorities as impermissibly erotic.

The word itself, wrote Dom Denys Rutledge, is to most people unpleasing and evil-sounding, "so that they hesitate to use it in public or say it only in a whisper, or look round first to see if children are present."

> In the mind of the scholar responsible for the word in the big *Oxford Dictionary* [adds Father Rutledge] there seems to have been present a suspicion that it carried the idea of *inciting* to unchaste and lewd behaviour, for he quotes *Webster* as offering the murals at Pompeii, in rooms designed for the Bacchanalian orgies, as examples of pornography.

So it is the presentation, he concludes, through words or the visual arts, of the unchaste. And he makes the profound observation that the portrayal of what is good and beautiful in sex may "corrupt" as easily as the portrayal of the unchaste—"perhaps more easily since it is always the positive good in an act which through external circumstances is evil that attracts. Man can never be attracted by evil as such."

ALL OF WHICH IS IMPORTANT in considering the development of printed and pictorial pornography as an industry. I accept the separation of pornography from obscenity, practically as well as etymologically (which now hardly matters at all). In Europe and America some aspects of sexuality can be obscene, though among tribes with fertility cults they may be sacred. There are private acts and functions with no sexual content that would be publicly obscene, though they could never entice, or incite, or tempt anyone into doing anything he should not do and might even make him sick.

So it was pornography rather than obscenity that took an immense modern impetus from the secondary education that was made statutorily compulsory in England in 1902. Since 1896 Northcliffe's *Daily Mail* had been building up a habitual mass readership (as well as his weekly journals), upon whom the pornographers gradually moved in. It was very largely adolescent, an audience of schoolboys; and some of them were very probably harmed by it in so far as they were being introduced to the greatest human love sacrament as though it were the bearded lady in a side-show. It is known that the pornographic books and magazines also reach a large number of lonely middle-aged and elderly men, to whom it would seem they can do no conceivable harm and to whom they may possibly afford a solace and relief that is free from harm to others. The trade built up until at the middle of the century a large industry was thriving on it, many of the publications and periodicals being covert subsidiaries of publishing houses that were always ready to disown them. There was money in 20th-century pornography, but there was risk as well.

By 1956, when the Select Committee on the Obscene Publications Bill was receiving evidence, the Home Office was able to supply the following figures (I have selected those given for the five-year period then concluded):

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	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
Number of "Destruction Orders" made	115	154	132	38	38
Number of articles ordered to be destroyed:					
Books and magazines	31,842	44,130	167,293	3,056	2,110
Photographs	8,329	20,141	10,803	7,142	3,019
Postcards	16,029	32,603	16,646	1,214	22,558
Miscellaneous	2,546	1,950	18,609	151	1,745
Persons found guilty of publishing obscene books	34	49	111	43	42
Total amount of Fines	£906	£2,786	£12,677	£1,830	£1,724
Range of prison sentences	6 to 18 months	3 to 12 months	3 to 18 months	2 weeks to 3 years	2 months to 1 year

The heavy figures for 1954, which was also the year of serious prosecutions, were largely due to the seizure by the police of 108,000 copies of a book ordered by a stipendiary magistrate to be destroyed as obscene.

And in 1963, four years after the Obscene Publications Act came into operation, the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, addressing a public meeting on "Pornography as Big Business," said that the Soho bookshops engaged in this particular trade were then "taking as much as £100 a day—that is £30,000 a year." Referring in particular to obscene paperback "novels" imported from America he said this:

> A few years ago there were practically none. That was because there was until 1961 a prohibition of the importation—except under licence—of American printed matter unless the article was in excess of a fixed value. In 1961 the restrictions on dollar imports were relaxed. Between 1961 and 1963 the Police and Customs between them actually seized 1,863,000 obscene novels. . . . Of course, when I say imported I am speaking only of those which were either seized by the Customs on entry or subsequently seized by the police. It is difficult to hazard a guess what the actual figure is, but one would think the police and customs were lucky if, between them, they managed to seize more than one in every half-dozen imported into this country.

Which would produce a total of about 12 million obscene imported novels. The Deputy D.P.P. added that "pin-up magazines" were published mainly in the United Kingdom and that the extent of the trade could be judged from the fact that on one raid in November 1963, the police seized over eight tons of them. "The printers and publishers are changing every day," he said, "and the police find that their efforts to stem the tide of these magazines are rather like those of Canute."

THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACT of 1964 amended the 1959 Act so as to catch the wholesaler, from whom no one other than the retail dealer, and certainly not a policeman, would be likely to obtain a book or magazine. It did this by making it an offence merely to *have* an obscene article for publication for gain. But the police now complain that it took away with one hand what it had given them with the other; it provides that the wholesaler—or anyone else—is not to be convicted

> if he proves that he had not examined the article and had no reasonable cause to suspect that it was such that his having it could make him liable to be convicted of an offence.

This was a present to the pornographer, wholesale or retail. "The wily business man in the pornographic trade," said the Deputy D.P.P. in the speech already quoted (a man in the wrong kind of business is always wily) "is well aware of this defence."

> He makes full use of it in this way. The American publishers send him quantities of books without invoicing them by their titles. They are merely ordered in bulk and shipped in bulk, and the documents don't show the titles or the nature of the books consigned.

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It doesn't seem particularly wily, and in fact it was being done before the special defence was provided by law. But there is reason to believe that some aspects of the trade are more prosperous than ever; and it is a trade that derives a fresh stimulus from every effort to stamp it out by police action. The comparison with Canute may be a better one than it had seemed to the Deputy D.P.P.; for that wise King was concerned to show his sycophantic courtiers, not that he could control the tides but that they were invincible and that he had got his feet wet. The police may be doing much the same thing.

The Vice Societies

THE VICTORIANS ARE TOO CLOSE TO US to be written about with the confidence that informs the histories of the Middle Ages. My mother remembered the 1870 Siege of Paris and Forster's Education Act, the publication of *Through the Looking Glass*, Booth founding the Salvation Army in 1878. In 1879, my father was brought home from Zululand as an orphan of nine because his father had died in the massacre of the 10th Regiment of Foot at Isandhlwana. Both parents lived to a great age and remembered Victorian England vividly. It was a different England from the one I now read about, in books written by men half my age. As my parents' ageing memories reached the curious condition in which the events of last week are forgotten and those of 75 years ago become crystal clear, I encouraged them to remember and talk. My picture seems more vivid than the one I get from the social histories.

The Victorians may have done a little less reading than we do but they lived in what they read, identifying themselves with the fictional characters invented in such vast numbers for them. They had little leisure. (My parents seem to have had none.) They got into trouble less, partly because there was less time for mischief, partly because the police seldom seemed to catch anyone but the most ostentatious blackguards and the horizontal (and multitudinous) drunks. The Victorians found time, as men and women have found time since the Creation, for much sexual promiscuity; a dead baby in the street was as common a sight then as an abandoned car is now, and everyone, charitably assuming that it was illegitimate, passed by on the other side. There was much exhortation from pulpits and from leader columns. And there were the Vice Societies.

The most energetic of these was the *Society for the Suppression of Vice* founded as far back as 1803 as a successor to William Wilberforce's "Proclamation Society." The Wilberforce idea had been to revive and implement a Proclamation issued about 30 years earlier by George III, which included a requirement that all good citizens should unite to condemn

> loose and licentious prints, books and publications, dispensing poison to the minds of the young and unwary; and to punish the publishers and the vendors thereof.

Both the Archbishops and all the Bishops supported it. In many ways it resembled today's Social Morality Council (formerly the Public Morality Council), from whose annual reports the following passage might well have been taken—instead it is from the Proclamation Society's report for 1800:

> The publication of obscene books and prints is an offence which attracted the Society's earliest attention, and to which as an object of the first importance it has uniformly continued to direct its regard.

The writers of obscene books had thus taken precedence in the Society's demonology over the opponents of Sunday observance, atheistic propagandists (the Society had many conflicts with the irreverent Richard Carlile, though even he supported its campaigns against obscenity), fortune-tellers, brothels, disorderly theatres and music-halls. The Society was supported, at least in its censorship campaign, by Joseph Hume, Francis Place—and Dr. Thomas Bowdler.

Dr. Bowdler, editor of the *Family Shakespeare*, was a scholar of immense industry whose name has become a traditional joke. "Nothing," he said in the Preface to his ten-volume Shakespeare, "is added to the original text, but those words and expressions are omitted which cannot with propriety be read aloud in a family." Bowdlerising has angered generations of purists, but the Shakespeare texts we had at school owed much to him—without acknowledgment, which would have made them unsaleable among the headmasters and education committees. "No man ever did better service to Shakespeare," wrote Swinburne in *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, 1894, "than the man who made it possible to put him into the hands of intelligent and imaginative children." And Swinburne knew what expurgation could do to a man's work.

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IN SPITE OF IT ALL, or perhaps because of it, pornography poured from the printing presses —long erotic novels of absolutely no survival value, whose heroes staggered from one bed to another; weekly and monthly magazines which pandered to all those appetities that the "Vice Societies" were working vainly to eliminate. There was a huge flagellation literature (to which Swinburne enthusiastically contributed), and it appeared in many guises and at every kind of cost. The "readership explosion" had taken the class out of pornography and merely rearranged its prices to suit all purses.

A small proportion of all these publications was being imported from France. Its significance was exaggerated because the arbitrary powers of the Customs authorities made it a little easier to control than the indigenous product; and by making a fuss of it the law could seem to be doing rather better than it really was. By 1853 a Customs Consolidation Act had been passed to deal more effectively—by seizing them at the ports—with "indecent or obscene prints, paintings, books, cards, lithographic or other engravings or any other indecent or obscene articles." Twenty-three years later a further "Consolidation Act" repeated this list of undesirables and merely added photographs—by that time the "Paris photograph" had already become famous. By this Act of 1876 (as now re-enacted in 1952) the Customs Officers can seize "obscenities" they find being imported and give notice to the bearer or to the consignee that this has been done. (They do it orally if he is there at the time.) He is allowed one month to contest the seizure if he wants to. Usually he doesn't, but contrary to what seems to be the general belief it is for the Customs authorities, if he does contest it in writing, to take the matter to Court. They call it "taking condemnation proceedings." The proceedings are civil, not criminal, and the burden of proof (which is rather less heavy than if they *were* criminal) rests on the Customs men. *But* they can prosecute criminally if they think the case is a bad one, and the maximum penalties would then be £100 or three times the value of the seized book or books, plus two years' imprisonment—the longest prison sentence that Magistrates are authorised to impose. The Solicitor to the Commissioners of Customs and Excise, Mr. M. G. Whittome, told the Select Committee of 1956 that "in practice, individuals importing obscene matter in single copies for personal use would *not* be prosecuted although the matter would be seized." If the seizure is not contested, or it is contested unsuccessfully, the "obscene matter" is destroyed. But specimen and marked copies are kept: the Customs Officers don't want to read all the way through again, when another copy turns up in someone's luggage.

Obscenity, 1857

THEN IN 1857 Lord Campbell produced his famous Bill empowering the Magistrates to order the destruction of books and prints (found in this country, not imported ones) if they believed that publication of them would amount to "a misdemeanour proper to be prosecuted." A magistrate could issue a search warrant on being shown a copy of the offending book or article; and usually the police would then expect to come back to him with a lot more. Some mixed bags have been placed before magistrates after searches of this kind. Among hundreds, or perhaps, thousands of "girlie" magazines and non-seaside postcards there may be one or two good novels containing words that have shocked the police, accustomed as the police are to seeing them only on walls or hearing them in mess-room adjudications on rival footballers; and until *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was vindicated in 1960, the appearance of that book among seized magazines had been enough to get a number of small booksellers into prison. Introducing his Bill in the House of Lords in 1857, Lord Campbell said it was:

> intended to apply exclusively to works *written for the single purpose of corrupting the morals of youth*, and of a nature calculated to shock the common feelings of decency in a well regulated mind.... When there are people who designedly and industriously manufacture books and prints *with the intention of corrupting morals, and when they succeed in their infamous purpose*, I think it is necessary for the legislature to interpose.

I have italicised the phrases that show how far this Act was from reality, and yet how little its Parliamentary purpose has been studied in the course of its enforcement. Purpose, and intention, and success in sowing corruption, have played next to no part in the many trials to which the Act has given rise. Myriads of books have been burned because magistrates have felt their own well-regulated minds to be shocked. Yet Lord Campbell was no kill-joy, at least in relation to the youthful pleasures of the well-to-

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do. He thought you could have well-regulated fun—fun so long as you kept it within bounds. According to Hardcastle's biography of him he once said this in extenuation of the roisterer:

> I cannot help thinking that an occasional booze has a favourable tendency to excite the faculties [I wonder what faculties his Lordship had in mind?], to warm the affections, to improve the manners, and to form the character of youth. Of course it is to be understood that excess is to be avoided, which is not only contrary to morality but inconsistent with true enjoyment.

Only ten years went by before this Act was called into use in a story that put *Hicklin's* Case into the law books of the entire English-speaking world. The Wolverhampton Magistrates had made an order for the destruction of 252 copies of an anti-papist pamphlet on the ground that it was obscene. The owner of the pamphlets, Mr. Henry Scott, who had bought them to distribute as a good Anglican, was therefore the "publisher." He appealed to Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions, where the Recorder allowed his appeal on the ground that the pamphlet was concerned only to "expose" the Church of Rome and not to harm anyone's morals. The learned Recorder's name was Hicklin; and when the prosecution, having decided to appeal further to the High Court, asked Mr. Hicklin to "state a case for the consideration of a Queen's Bench Divisional Court," they launched it into legal history as *Hicklin's* Case. The Judges of the Queen's Bench Divisional Court, led by Chief Justice Cockburn, reversed Mr. Hicklin's decision in a judgment that sent the words "tendency to deprave and corrupt" on their hundred years' odyssey through the criminal courts.

BUT MERELY DESTROYING books and pamphlets was thought not to satisfy the public feeling, or at least the judicial feeling, that someone must also be seen to be punished. There had to be some prosecutions, fines and imprisonments. On what authority? Parliament in 1857 had said nothing about punishing anyone, apart from burning his books, which seldom ruined him.

So the Common Law was invoked, "the law of the land from time immemorial," from before the birth of Parliament; some of which is supposed to reside "in the bosoms of the Judges" (*in gremio judicum*). Not that the law of libel came down from time immemorial. Its attempted application to obscenity had failed 150 years earlier in the case of *R.* v. *Read* (1708). Read had published a book called *The Fifteen Plagues of a Maidenhead*, and although the Judge said it was "stuff not fit to be mentioned publicly," he added that "if there is no remedy in the Spiritual Court, it does not follow that there must be a remedy here. There is no law to punish it—I wish there were, but we cannot make law."

They had taken only 20 years to get over this shyness about "making law." This time the offender was Edward Curll, bookseller, pamphleteer—and pornographer. Alexander Pope had a dig at him in Book I of *The Dunciad*:

> *Hence bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,*
> *Escape in monsters and amaze the town.*
> *Hence Miscellanies spring, the weekly boast*
> *Of Curll's chaste press and Lintot's rubric post.*[1]

And in 1727 Edward Curll had published the book that the law seemed to have been waiting for. It was called *Venus in the Cloister, or the Nun in Her Smock*. It was a bit too much. This kind of thing *must* be wrong and, if the law didn't say so, it had better start saying so now. What we now call "the public good" was then known as "the King's Peace," a concept as old as Saxon law. It wasn't always in operation throughout the country or all the time—it had once been confined to regally favoured areas and to holy seasons. And it used to die with the King. Thus when Henry I died "there was seen tribulation in the land, for every man that could forthwith robbed another" (according to a chronicler quoted in *Kenny's Outlines of Criminal Law*). When Edward I was away at the Crusades and his father died, the nobles at home took it upon themselves to proclaim "the King's Peace" by way of preserving order. Any criminal offence whatsoever (according to recent editions of *Kenny*) can be a "breach of the Queen's peace"; and for centuries the Judges could decide what was such a breach and what wasn't.

IN EDWARD CURLL'S CASE they decided that the publication of *Venus in the Cloister* was a breach of George II's peace. They fined Curll and made him stand in the pillory. Only one of the Judges seemed to think (as more of us would think today) that a "breach of the peace" ought to be something in the nature of a public uproar, with police helmets flying and innocent bystanders being "flung into police vans." The

[1] Lintot was another bookseller and publisher. His name on his bookshop was in vivid red lettering.

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rest of the King's Bench took the view put to them by the Attorney-General:

> This is an obscene libel, and an offence at Common Law. It tends to corrupt the morals of the King's subjects. Peace includes good order and government, and it may be broken in many instances without any actual force—first, if it be an act against the constitution of civil government; secondly, if it be against religion; thirdly, if against morality. I do not insist that every immoral act is indictable, such as telling a lie or the like; but if it is destructive of morality in general, if it does or may affect all the King's subjects, then it is an offence of a public nature. Upon this distinction it is that particular acts of fornication are not punishable in the temporal courts, and bawdy houses are.

Thus the idea of "obscene libel" had arrived. Not in the sense of private libel, which is always defamatory and is of two kinds, civil and criminal—depending on the remedy sought by the victim, *i.e.*, whether damages for himself or punishment for his traducer. Obscene libel was one of the "public libels," the others (both now obsolescent) being blasphemous and seditious. The idea that a libel could be "for the public good" was recognised by Parliament a century later, when the Libel Act of 1843 said that anyone *prosecuted for defamatory libel* who wanted to run the defence that what he had written was true (the "plea of justification") would have to prove also that its publication was "for the public good."

Curll's case had led to no witch-hunt, encouraged no spate of prosecutions. Even Wilkes' *Essay on Woman*, surely an obscene publication by the standard adopted in Curll's case, was prosecuted for political reasons only (1763). But although in this perennial publisher-*v.*-censor game it is always easy to confuse cause and effect, there did ensue throughout the 19th century a torrent of mainly decorous literature —from Dickens, Lytton, Dumas, Disraeli, Lear, the Brontës, Thackeray, Mrs. Gaskell, Kingsley, Hawthorne, Borrow, Trollope, Charles Reade, Meredith, Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Henry Wood, Lewis Carroll, Ouida, Alcott, Henry James, Stevenson.

IT WAS THE GREAT AGE of readers, the greatest of all for writers. Virginia Woolf, in our time, could speak of a Victorian childhood. "I have sometimes dreamt," she wrote,

> that when the Day of Judgement dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their reward—their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble—the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy, when He sees *us* coming with our books under our arms, "Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading."

The love of reading was almost universal. Did the Judges' discovery of "obscene libel" proceed from a public longing for books of the "family reading" kind, or was that longing a timid and obedient outcome of the Judges' discovery? It is possible at least to maintain that Victorian authors and publishers, overshadowed by a large warning notice that they had better find other appetities and adventures to depict than the sexuality of man, tried harder to find them than publishers have tried at any other period in our literary history. They found them too. Though the sexuality was going on in no small way all the time, most of the authors I have just named wrote as though sexuality was something to be no more than hinted at; and the consequent stimulus to their non-erotic inventiveness coincided with the great age of the English novel. I draw no inferences.

The French Invasion

BUT JUST OCCASIONALLY a publisher rebelled, keeping the law from falling fast asleep. The works of Balzac, Zola, Baroche, Sainte-Beuve and other Frenchmen who had never heard of "The Queen's Peace," the Common Law, or obscene libel, were imported in considerable quantities. From about 1870 onwards there was a mounting campaign in the press, not only in the numerous religious papers but in the sober literary reviews, against these polluters of the stream of English literature of the time.

Henry Vizetelly, a London bookseller and publisher of Italian extraction, had published Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* and works as morally unassailable as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. He began to publish translations of Sand, Daudet, Prosper Mérimée, Maupassant, Gautier, Balzac, Flaubert, and finally Zola. Zola proved to be too much, especially *La Terre* (even though Vizetelly had "Bowdlerised" it for delicate English readers). Too much, that is to say, for the National Vigilance Association, not for the police or the Home Office. The Association took out a summons against Henry Vizetelly for "uttering and publishing certain

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obscene libels, to wit, certain books entitled *La Terre* by Emile Zola, *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert, *Sappho* by Alphonse Daudet, *Bel Ami* by Guy de Maupassant, and *Madame de Maupin* by Theophile Gautier, against the Peace of Our Sovereign Lady The Queen, her Crown and Dignity." The trial came on at the Old Bailey on the 31st October 1888, and began with a furious row about the language of the prosecution (now rather reluctantly taken over by the Crown) in diminishing the status of Emile Zola as a writer. When prosecuting Counsel was reading aloud the passages that the jury were expected to find obscene, a member of the jury objected to having to listen to them.

Well, what would *you* do in Vizetelly's place? You start with a jury that can't even bear to hear the words you've offered. Zola was a man who, two weeks earlier, had been appointed to the French Legion of Honour for his services to literature and freedom. He gave up the case. He changed his plea to Guilty and the trial was over before it had really begun. The Court felt more merciful than it does when a publisher or bookseller insists that his book is *not* obscene and fights the case to the end. Would Mr. Vizetelly promise to withdraw all his Zola books from circulation? So far as he could, Yes. So he was discharged. The very next year he was in the dock again over some more of his French novels, and this time the Judge gave him three months' imprisonment.

Havelock Ellis

TEN YEARS LATER (1898) there appeared the first volume in Dr. Havelock Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. It was called *Sexual Inversion* and it dealt, clinically and dispassionately, with homosexuality. It may have been a little unfortunate that the timidity of English publishers had obliged Havelock Ellis to resort to a crooked pornographic publisher called Villiers (he had a dozen aliases and his real name is now in doubt). But it was a major misfortune for Ellis that only three years earlier (1895) the sensational trials of Oscar Wilde had convinced the British public that Justinian was right—homosexuality was so evil that it was the cause of earthquakes.

Havelock Ellis was a writer of grace and distinction—he was said to have "the patience of a Darwin, the brilliance of a Huxley, the style of a Macaulay." He was revered in medical circles long after the advent of Freud, whose theories soon became the more generally popular for their liberating effect on the conscience. The prosecution could have been the occasion of a major change in the law which, as it turned out, was to be delayed another 60 years, namely the decision that expert evidence should be admissible to prove a book's scientific merits. The defence assembled a team of experts, precisely as in the *Chatterley* case in 1960. The Judge (the Recorder at the Old Bailey) *might* have refused to hear them, as the Bow Street Magistrate was to refuse 30 years later in the case against Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*. No doubt there was present to all the engaged legal minds the opinion of that great 19th-century lawyer Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, that the publication of an "obscene libel" could be "for the public good," an idea taken over from the established defence of "justification" in a prosecution for defamatory libel. But the problem, alas, did not arise. The defendant in this case was not Dr. Havelock Ellis but the bookseller who had been selling *Sexual Inversion*—Thomas Bedborough. To the dismay of everyone else the bookseller at the last minute—as has happened in so many cases since—pleaded Guilty; and the case was over without a word of evidence.

> I am willing to believe [the Recorder told Bedborough magnaminously, binding him over not to do it again] that in acting as you did you might at the first outset perhaps have been gulled into the belief that somebody might say this was a scientific work. But it is impossible for anybody with a head on his shoulders to open the book without seeing that it is a pretence and a sham, and that it is merely entered into for the purpose of selling this obscene publication.

The assembled medical witnesses, all of whom had heads on their shoulders, went disconsolately away, their evidence unheard. Unheard also, Havelock Ellis was condemned in the public mind as what he bitterly called "a purveyor of literary garbage." He had no right to speak, he could not be heard because he was not a defendant; and if a thousand booksellers took the same course and branded his book a thousand times, his position would always be the same.

SO IT WOULD TODAY. The law officers of the Crown and the Home Office legal advisers steadfastly resisted all attempts, during the debates on the 1959 Bill, to give the author, publisher and printer the right to be joined as a

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defendant when a bookseller is *prosecuted* (as distinct from having his books destroyed). The Select Committee thought this right *should* be accorded:

> The Society of Authors pressed strongly for a provision giving a right to the author to be heard in any proceedings where he was *not* himself a party, although they admitted that his status would constitute a novelty in legal procedure.... We appreciate the force of the arguments put forward. Two fundamental liberties are involved. The first is freedom of expression: a reputable author will wish both to stand by what he has written and to defend his writing against attack in any form, but he may be denied the opportunity to do so under the present law. Secondly, the writer of a book has a form of property in the continued circulation of his work, but he may find that he is unable to intervene in a trial where both his royalties and his reputation may be adversely affected. Similar considerations apply in the case of the publisher and printer.

So they recommended that in "destruction order proceedings," the author, publisher, and printer should be given a right to be heard "unless the person summoned objects." In the event the 1959 Act gave them the right whether the person summoned objected or not. (The only reason why the person summoned might object is that he wants to get it all over quickly and cheaply; but the co-defendants could be made to pay their share of the cost—or even more. Anyway, Parliament swept the objection aside.) But the Select Committee also recommended that the same right should accrue in the case of a *prosecution—e.g.*, in the Havelock Ellis case:

> In the case of a criminal prosecution... the author, publisher, printer and bookseller may well be accused jointly, but this will not necessarily be so.[2] We consider that if he is not already charged the author should be given a right to be heard provided that the defence has no objection.

Parliament would have none of it. They could not see what *locus standi* would be enjoyed by people who volunteered to appear, and they would not "tie the hands of the prosecuting authorities" as to whom they should bring compulsorily to Court as defendants. So the Havelock Ellis situation could—though it will probably not—happen all over again. His book, however, has since been translated into dozens of languages—"to reach people," he wrote in later years, "who could not say what a Recorder is.... Until this day it continues to bring me from many lands the reverent and grateful words of strangers, whose praise keeps me humble in the face of the supreme mystery of life."

YOU MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT that the discovery, or re-discovery, of the Common Law offence of obscene libel would have settled the pattern of Crown policy at long last, in relation to "obscenity" and the printed word. When the police now seized a quantity of obscene or pornographic "rubbish," being authorised to do so by a magistrate who had seen a sample of it, they would merely ask him for a destruction order. No one would be accused of anything; there would be no "prosecution," but the books would be got out of the way with a minimum of trouble. When the police came across a book which, though it seemed to them obscure or pornographic, contained long words, Latin phrases or footnotes about *The Golden Bough* or *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, that would be a matter for a jury and so there would be a prosecution against the publisher and sometimes the author.

But in fact no such pattern emerged. Not all the pin-up merchants (who today are almost immune but who were then considered quintessentially evil) were disposed of by magistrates' orders. Some of them were committed for trial by juries.

As recently as the 1950s they were being sent to prison. If you go round some of the prisons today you will see the walls of cells and workshops decorated with the very pin-ups they went to prison for publishing.

[2] In practice they never are.

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Harry Levin

Paradise

in Heaven and on Earth

THE SUBJECT is one for which I do not profess to be qualified. So far as can be gathered, there does not seem to be much prospect that I shall ever come to know it at first hand. In fact it does not come, by definition, within the divinely specified limits of human observation. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," wrote the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, echoing the prophecy of Isaiah. Yet where there is not a shred of evidence, there can be an endless amount of speculation. There exists a Shrovetide farce by Hans Sachs in which a wandering scholar tells a farmer's widow that he has recently been sojourning in Paris. The simple woman has never heard of the French metropolis; but she has heard a good deal about paradise, where she thinks that her late husband abides; and she somehow confuses those two places, with a credulity which works out to the scholar's dishonest advantage. One could hold forth with more confidence about Paris, which has not the reputation of being such an ineffable locale or of having such Rhadamanthine entrance requirements. It is narrated that when Moses himself asked an angel about the nature of paradise, he was sternly warned that it was immeasurable, unfathomable, and innumerable. However, this injunction has not stayed the age-old effort to take its measure, fathom its range, and enumerate its attractions.

The flaming sword that guards the interdicted entrance continues to fascinate, as well as to put off, curiosity-seekers. The apocryphal Sir John Mandeville, whose fancies greatly outdistanced his famous travels, confessed:

> Of paradys ne can I not speken propurly for I was not there; it is fer beyonde and that forthinketh me [I regret it]. And also I was not worthi. But as I have herd seye of wyse men beyonde, I schall tele you with gode will.

And Mandeville went on, as so many others had done before and still others would do since, depending on hearsay, to describe the indescribable. Such descriptions, when we sort them out, testify with monotonous eloquence to the poverty of the human imagination, reminding us of the poor cockney dwarf in a novel by Dickens, who had been to the country once in his childhood and cherished a vague remembrance of a lot of grass and some swans. The radiance, the fragrance, the balmy climate, the spontaneous bounty, the twittering birds, all those lawns and terraces and fountains, those pavilions of so little else except crystal and jasper, that continual music in the background, the fruit so available and uniformly delicious that Eve grew fatally bored with it, the colourful verdure and kindly animals varying only with the flora and fauna known to the describer —there can hardly be another theme, among the universals of folklore, that has been sounded for so long and so widely with such a modicum of variation.

"IF A MAN could pass through Paradise in a dream," mused the dreamy Coleridge in *Anima Poetae,* "and have a flower presented to him as a pledge that his soul had really been there, and if he found that flower in his hand when he awoke—Ay! and what then?" What then indeed? Perhaps our most appropriate answer to this rhetorical question, characteristically a

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self-interruption, would be to suggest that in so far as the floral memento was real, it would have been a poem. Mystics have presumably passed through paradise in their dreams, but their transport has not lent itself too palpably to verbal description, whereas the poets—fusing their private fantasies with racial memories—could bring that vision into the upper reaches of our experience. Therefore comparative literature rushes in where comparative religion fears to tread. The enraptured Elizabethans could sing, with Michael Drayton:

> *The poets paradice this is,*
> *To which but few can come;*
> *The muses onely bower of blisse*
> *Their deare Elizium*

Yet, as these verses blithely hint, the initiation is rare. The poet who returns from it to tell his tale may envision himself, like Coleridge, as having drunk the milk of paradise. But since that particular rapture was actually stimulated by opium, it was what Baudelaire would call *un paradis artificiel*, an expansion of consciousness promised today by those who experiment with psychedelic drugs. Moreover, Coleridge found himself unable to recapture his paradisiac dream of "Kubla Khan." His sunny pleasure-dome, his underground river, his incense-bearing trees, his caves of ice, though they will always tantalise our minds, are fragmentary glimpses of a realm that we shall never be able to visit.

ALL THE MORE honour, then, to that greatest of poetic visionaries whose septicentennial we crossed four years ago, and whose bust was then encircled with many garlands of scholarly asphodel! For, questionless, no dream vision has ever been so graphically rendered as Dante's; no single work of fiction has encompassed so vast a conception; no other dreamer, awakening from an immersion in the guiltiest anxieties and the most ecstatic hopes of mankind, has succeeded in framing them all within so architectonic a synthesis. Benedetto Croce, with an aesthetic rigour which has proved to be untenable, tried to draw an oversharp distinction between the pure poetry and the didactic structure of *The Divine Comedy*. Happily, other critics have not pursued that endeavour to splinter its unique wholeness into fragments. Though it abounds in passages that could stand as poems by themselves or touches of detail that confer immediacy on seemingly distant matters, Dante's supreme imaginative achievement surely is to play the demiurge, the poet as maker who has made the framework of his poem coextensive with the cosmic system. Yet its very scale has hindered the common reader from appreciating its larger symmetries. He is likely to be more familiar with the excerpts that turn up in anthologies than with the context of supernal design. Setting out to accompany Dante, like Vergil, he may never get to paradise.

This propensity to fall by the wayside—or, at any rate, to linger in less exalted regions—is by no means limited to the faint-hearted, but represents a deep-seated aspect of the response to Dante, which his commentators and editors confirm. Thus the catalogue of the British Museum lists some five hundred titles under *Inferno*, as contrasted with a hundred and fifty under *Purgatorio* and about a hundred under *Paradiso*. Though there are fewer entries, the same discouraging proportions are roughly preserved in the Library of Congress, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, and most other libraries. Thence a number of implications follow, least of all the naïve fact that more people start to read a big book than ever finish it. More profound is the hard-won wisdom of Vergil, who figures as Dante's guide because he has visited Hades in the *Aeneid* and has discovered that the way down is much easier than the way back: *"facilis descensus Averni."* The descending path seems also to be the more attractive, for those who do not take it personally as a matter of life and death. Hell and purgatory are more closely linked to the circumstances of mundane existence. "The greater part of those who have heretofore lived," Jonathan Edwards would preach, "... are now in hell." The threat of hellfire has been the main concern of Puritan sermons; Calvinism has stressed the damnation of sinners more than the salvation of the elect; and the repression of physical impulses, if less interesting, has seemed nobler than their indulgence.

Sin is more recognisable than grace, just as descent is less arduous than ascent. As in Plato's myth of Er, the soul, whatever the conditions of its journey through the afterlife, confronts the alternative of moving downwards or upwards. Heaven itself, as the homeland of souls, would scarcely be meaningful unless it were juxtaposed to the notion of hell—a complementary relationship which may have originated in

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Jung's collective unconscious, and which has been suggestively illustrated by Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934). The threat of infernal punishments, as it is invoked by the traditional doctrines of eschatology, seems to leave a stronger impression than the promise of heavenly rewards. Hell is regarded as matter, where heaven is pure form. One of Dante's most clear-headed critics, Francesco de Sanctis, commented upon the *Paradiso*: "Its adequate form is feeling, the eternal jubilation." Hence it cannot be too precisely described; the feeling is not merely subjective, it is supersensory; and the poet can best convey some sense of it, paradoxically, by dwelling upon the inadequacy of its means of expression. Its basic precondition, along with height, is light: "*prima luce, . . . pura luce,/luce intelletual, . . . somma luce, . . . luce eterna.*" Dante is dazzled, to the verge of blindness, again and again. This bedazzlement seems all the brighter in its contrast to the darkling air he has traversed. The general effect could be epitomised in a verse from the Scottish poet Sir David Lyndsay: "Evident brychtnes, but obscuritie."

Every culture harbours a longing of its own for a great good place, an island of the blest or happy valley, whose qualities are notable for their freedom from those ills to which that culture is ordinarily vulnerable. Consequently the concept of the next world flourishes most richly in situations that are by no means flourishing; conversely it tends to be played down where satisfaction is taken in the material things of this world. The *contemptus mundi* of the Middle Ages was the point of departure for a spectacular series of visions, such as the *Visio Pauli* or St. Patrick's Purgatory, which Howard Rollin Patch has recounted in his fascinating survey, *The Other World, according to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (1950). An ascetic bleakness here below, in various religions of the East, seems to have promoted the most gorgeous expectations of the hereafter. In the United States it is the underprivileged Negro whose consolatory gospel has harped on the blessings stored up for him beyond the pearly gates. Our attempt to imagine heaven is bound to be an amelioration of the earth as we have experienced it. When—colloquialising a numinous phrase—we talk of being in the seventh heaven, we often mean no more than that we are indulging our vanity or satisfying our appetite. The voyager Maeldúin was greeted with good liquor when he explored the otherworldly isles. Possibly this was because he had set out from Ireland; yet we recollect that the Olympian gods prided themselves upon the ambrosia they served.

The fairylands of Celtic lore are far more imaginative than, let us say, the *Bauernhimmel,* the peasants' heaven of Germanic popular tradition, which is single-minded in its devotion to creature comforts and riotous living. The daydream of another world becomes much earthier than our existing one when it takes the form of *Schlaraffenland*, or the Land of Cockaigne, as it has been pictured by Pieter Brueghel. There the cottage roofs are thatched with pies, the fences are composed of sausages, the streams overflow with wine, and little pigs already roasted—with knives and forks conveniently stuck into them—run about squealing: "Eat me! eat me!" Its denizens, who have eaten their way into it through a rice-pudding mountain, grossly snore unbraced and surfeited, the incarnations of sloth and gluttony. Its counterpart on the American scene would be the hobo's heaven, with its lakes of stew and whisky too, and its Big Rock Candy Mountain. Here the idea of happiness is the removal of inhibitions ("All the cops have wooden legs"), as well as the gratification of the senses. A slightly more sophisticated tribute to the enjoyments of this unbuttoned *modus vivendi* is presented in a 17th-century English broadside ballad, "An Invitation to Lubberland":

> *There's nothing there but holy-days,*
> *with musick out of measure;*
> *Who can forbear to speak the praise*
> *of such a land of pleasure?*
> *There you may lead a lazy life,*
> *free from all kinds of labour,*
> *And he that is without a wife*
> *may borrow of his neighbour.*

Such heavens, from a more orthodox viewpoint, would obviously be hells. Yet they can be vehicles of religious ethics: the Middle English poem on the Land of Cockaigne is an ironic satire on the idleness, the luxury, and the lechery of the monastic establishments. And, though these all too anthropomorphic mock-heavens reduce the whole process to their own level of crude burlesque, they remind us that man's heavenly ideals could not but be projected out of his earthly involvements. Indian huntsmen seek a happy hunting ground, Viking warriors a feast in Valhalla after the battle, Jews

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a family reunion in Abraham's bosom, and polygamous Moslems a dalliance attended by houris. Every man has his own self-centred definition of euphoria, and creates a heterocosm out of his unfulfilled desires.

BUT IF THERE IS a projection from the stuff of our daily lives to the image of a higher existence, there can likewise be a sublimation in the fullest sense of the term. Of this, the shining exemplar is Dante's Beatrice, who began as an object of courtly poetising and ends—prefiguring the Virgin Mary—as a principle of spiritual enlightenment. Even as she replaces Vergil in guiding Dante through his *Paradiso*, so an ethereal insight must transcend a mere corporeal perception. Significantly, the transition takes place in the Terrestrial Paradise; Dante rejoins his lost love, divinely transfigured though she be, in the very garden where Adam and Eve tasted forbidden fruit. Despite the refinement of Dante's symbolic overview, it still conceives the after-life as an eternal prolongation of this life's happier moments, just as his Inferno transfixes its sinners in the unchanging postures of their sins. Differing views of the next world would emphasise its antithesis to this one, rather than its continuities. Many of Professor Patch's paradises cannot be described except by a string of negatives. The voyage of St. Brendan brings him to the Land of Promise, "where will be found health without sickness, pleasure without contention, union without quarrel," and so on. Felicity is the absence of such griefs as would seem to be man's usual lot, and Brendan's fabled land is a critique of what must have been a much grimmer actuality. Similarly, to praise the virtues of the Golden Age is to deplore the vices of subsequent ages, the deterioration of man and nature. One of the oldest Sumerian tablets celebrates the idyllic land of Dilmun, which is fabled to be free from sickness, old age, and death.

ADAM AND EVE (Cologne Bible, 1480)

"Goodness is Heaven," said William Blake, abstracting the problem in accordance with his belief that all deities reside in the human breast. "Evil is Hell." If this disembodiment were heresy, it had been foreshadowed long before, when certain Fathers of the Church had propounded an allegorical interpretation. The Kingdom of God, if it was not of this world, must be within; paradise must then be a state of mind.

The mind is its own place, and in it self
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.

But we ought not to repeat Milton's dictum without recalling that it is spoken by Satan, who has just failed to make a hell of heaven and who will now fail to make a heaven of hell. The mind may well be its own place, but Satan's mind is an anti-paradise: "Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell." Milton's predecessor Hugo Grotius, in his play *Adamus Exul*, allows his Satan to define heaven as the sole location of our hopes, with the corollary that anywhere else is a place of banishment for our ills:

Quicquid est optabile
Gratum in unum pariter adfluxit locum.
Iusso exulare, quicquid est alibi, malo.

So long as goodness is opposed by evil, some men will go on believing in a literal heaven and hell. Emanuel Swedenborg, though qualified as an 18th-century scientist, claimed that his extraordinarily concrete account of both places had been dictated to him by an angel "from things heard and seen." Furthermore, he believed that humans could keep in touch with the celestial sphere through a network of correspondences. "In general," he had learned from

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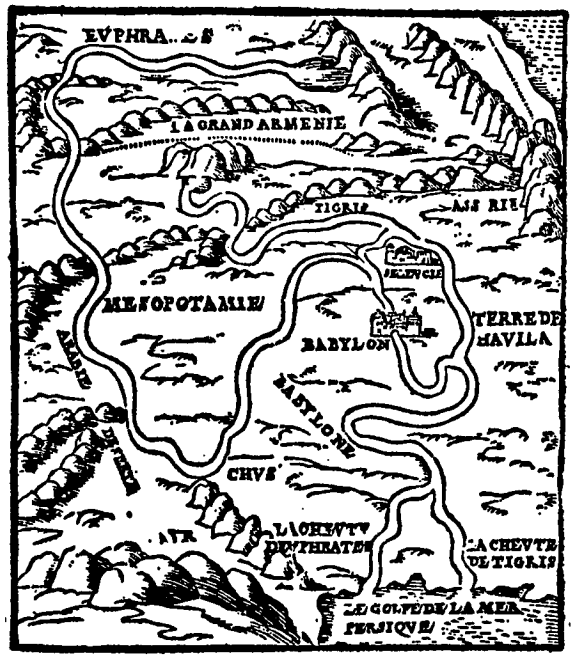
his seraphic informant, "a garden corresponds to the intelligence and wisdom of heaven; and for that reason heaven is called the garden of God; and men call it the heavenly paradise." Swedenborg, in his metaphysical zeal, almost puts the signification ahead of the symbol. In the natural order, gardens come at the beginning, heavens loom at some distance, and—since the two conceptions have often coalesced—we must try to bear in mind the differentiation.

THE PARABLE of the garden is the Urmyth of mankind. Bacon recapitulated the original statement of Genesis when he opened his essay: "God Almightie first Planted a Garden." Voltaire, after extended philosophic inquiry, could make no better recommendation for happiness than the continuance of Adam's pursuit: to dress and keep, to cultivate, one's garden. Edgar Allan Poe, in one of his megalomaniac reveries, fancied himself playing God as a landscape gardener and rearranging the scenery of a large and luxuriant domain. The garden—perennial norm of Shakespearean values—is central to the human condition because it sustains a personal relation with the universe; it embraces man's adaptation to nature and nature's adaptation to man; it domesticates for him what would otherwise be an alien environment. Taking it for granted as we too readily do, we can barely surmise how much its shade and sustenance must have meant to nomadic tribes wandering through the sun-baked wastelands of the Middle East—all that Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, later meant to the Israelites in the wilderness, all that the land of Beulah would promise again, or Zion from the vantage point of Babylon. "By how much Adam exceeded all living men in perfection, by being the immediate workmanship of God," Sir Walter Ralegh would write in his magniloquent *History of the World* (1614),

> by so much did that chosen and particular garden exceed all parts of the universal world, in which God had planted... the trees of Life, of Knowledge; plants only proper, and becoming the Paradise and Garden of so great a Lord.

Ralegh devoted his third chapter to a question perennially moot, "Of the place of Paradise." Immemorially, the Garden of Eden had been the navel of the earth, the centre of the cosmos, beyond the dawn; but where would that have been? Only one of its four rivers, the Euphrates, bore its modern name; the other three have been identified with the Tigris, the Ganges, and the Nile. Thence the speculative geographers shifted its locality to Asia or Africa or—as we shall be seeing—to the Americas, and beyond that to the North Pole, the stratosphere, or the moon. Those sites were "castles in the air" for Ralegh, who staunchly kept his feet on scriptural ground, and appended a map of Asia Minor to show that "eastward in Eden" designated the valley of the Euphrates. The second chapter of Genesis is the tersest of outlines; but it is greatly amplified in the hexaëmeral literature of the Creation; and it has been picturesquely filled in with the elaborate details of Talmudic literature, which Louis Ginzberg brought together in his monumental compilation, *The Legends of the Jews* (1909–1928). Undeterred by Mosaic warnings against enumeration, the Rabbis seem to have been fascinated by statistics, especially round numbers. They count eight hundred kinds of roses and myrtles, for instance, and sixty myriads of angels singing away in each corner



MAP OF EDEN (English Geneva Bible, 1560)

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of Eden. They report that the tree of life has fifteen thousand different tastes and perfumes, and that it would take five hundred years to cross an area equidistant to the diameter of the trunk of the tree of knowledge. The highest reward of the just is to sit under canopies and listen to God expounding the Torah.

Such is the nostalgic retrospect of a bookish people, far removed from their promised land or agrarian state. Adam and Eve, they surmised, had spent no more than six or seven hours in that garden. The key to the episode is that it was closed by the Fall; and so it remains the mythical prologue to history, the timeless preserve of an inaccessible perfection. "No one stays in Eden," James Baldwin has written in another connection. Yet everyone goes back to the ancestral sources in his own fashion, re-enacting the myth of our common progenitor Seth, retracing the footsteps of our ultimate parents down a green path to their proscribed abode, yearning for the days when man lived in primordial innocence with the beasts and near to God, close to the tree of life and uncontaminated by the tree of knowledge. When the fable was allegorised by St. Ambrose in his graphic treatise, *De Paradiso*, Eden stood for the soul; Adam symbolised the understanding and Eve the senses, with the serpent as delectation. This interpretation would seem to condemn the very meaning of *Eden*, which had its derivation from a Hebrew word for *pleasure*. The early Christian theologians were misogynists, who dated the loss of paradise not from the expulsion or the apple but from the creation of woman. Andrew Marvell would succinctly agree:

> *Such was that happy garden state,*
> *When man walked there without a mate . . .*
> *Two paradises 'twere in one*
> *To live in paradise alone.*

This would accord with Thoreau's cult of solitude at Walden, if not with Melville's "Paradise of Bachelors"—which he situated, not on Tahiti or the Marquesas, but in the convivial masculine society of the Temple at London. His friend Hawthorne, on the other hand, looked upon marriage as a renewal of Eden and highlighted his stories with paradisal imagery. And Omar Khayyám voiced his approval of *solitude à deux* by affirming that the presence of the beloved, along with a book, a jug, and a loaf, could turn a desert into an oasis: "*Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!*"

Eden as the precinct of sensuous delight, *hortus deliciarum*, could be only the most primitive version, the pastoral prefiguration of paradise. The latter word, deriving through the Greek from the Old Persian, is haloed with a distinctly Christian aura. Though it originally signified an orchard, park, or garden, its connotations have been vastly sublimated. The moment of transcendence could be marked by Luke's narrative of the crucifixion, when Jesus promises the good thief: "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." Where the emphasis was mainly retrospective in the Old Testament, looking towards a lost heritage, it is prospective in the New Testament, looking towards a future dispensation. Meanwhile the location has been shifting skyward, so that St. Paul can speak of being "caught up into paradise" and hearing "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." Given the custom of burial, it has been the inherent tendency of many mythologies to set the habitat of the dead underground, in some sort of Sheol. But the tendency to look up to deity, to locate the gods in the skies, engendered a countermovement, leaving the souls of the damned in their underworld while translating those of the blessed to the heavens. The deep concern of the Prophets for redemption, adumbrated when the second Isaiah foretold of new heavens and a new earth, was elaborated into a chiliastic spectacle by the Revelation of St. John, with its background of early Christian persecution and its mystagogic portents of the Millennium and the Last Judgment.

The New Jerusalem (German Bible, Zürich, 1536)

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The Biblical story commences in a garden and concludes in a city. The culmination of John's apocalypse, the panorama of New Jerusalem aglitter with precious stones and resounding with harps, arises in sublime compensation for Sodom or Babylon. St. Augustine will unfold an analogous tale of two cities: *civitas dei*, the holy city of the Catholic Church, and *civitas terrena*, the worldly corruption of the Roman Empire. When heaven is visualised as an extramundane metropolis, it reflects an urban civilisation; but it may also be a reaction from an all too fleshly city toward the imaginary garden again. Here the religious nostalgia is reinforced by the literary conventions of pastoralism. Ernst Robert Curtius has shown how the medieval Latin poets repeatedly depicted the same ideal landscape, the *locus amoenus* or pleasance. Tertullian, speaking of paradise as a place of divine pleasantness ("*divinae amoenitatis*"), likened it to the Elysian Fields. Vergil's classic depiction of them, like Ovid's reverberating description of the Golden Age, furnished the words and images of many poems on Eden. Some of those have been collected by Arturo Graf in the appendix to his monographic study, *La Leggenda del Paradiso Terrestre* (1878). "There is a certain place . . . (*Est locus* . . .)," they typically begin, and go on to specify its negative amenities: no chill nor blaze, no crime nor sickness, et cetera. Such is the hallowed spot from which the Phoenix takes its flight, in Latin verse and Anglo-Saxon paraphrase, to emerge as a symbol of resurrection.

It is characteristic of Dante, who found a place within his field of vision for everything, that his poem should comprehend both past and future. The past becomes the present through his encounters and recognition scenes, his dialogues with his dramatis personae, and the monologues of his mythical, legendary, and historical characters. The present becomes the future through the grandiose scheme of his work, his dramatisation of Christian eschatology, the afterworld where justice is unsparing to those popes and emperors who have abused it. We can recognise elements of personal retribution in the attitudes of this spiritual pilgrim who likewise happened to be a political exile. The city from which he was banished reappears, just as it does in Florentine paintings of the Holy Land, where the architecture looks Italian and the cherubim have Tuscan faces. His claims to truth must be reaffirmed at the levels of allegory, since his supernatural journey is literally fictitious, as it were a pseudo-apocalypse; yet his shrewd and poignant insights lend bodily substance to what, at other hands, might have become a sequence of weightless excursions in outer space. In the twenty-eighth canto of the *Purgatorio*, mingling the canonical traditions with bold touches of his own, he reveals the Terrestrial Paradise at the summit of the purgatorial mountain. Matelda, the tutelary spirit who welcomes the poet to this "nest of mankind," explains that it was first given by God to man as "a pledge of eternal peace"—a foretaste of the Celestial Paradise. It is explained in the *De Monarchia* that the former typifies earthly happiness, to be attained through moral teaching, while the latter stands for eternal happiness, to be sought through religious teaching.

The peace that Dante will not know on earth, he makes clear in his rendering of the Lord's Prayer, will be assured to us by the coming of God's kingdom. The identity of man's peace with God's will is definitively enunciated by Piccarda Donati, when Dante encounters her not far beyond the threshold of heaven: "*e la sua volontate è nostra pace.*" It is her contentment with her modest station in the moon's sphere that helps him to realise "how everywhere in heaven is paradise (*com' ogni dove/ in cielo è Paradiso*)." In equating paradise with the firmament, he has been guided by the astronomical knowledge of his day, and Beatrice delivers an informative lecture explaining the spots on the moon. The Ptolemaic universe, with its nine concentric spheres—the moon, the planets, the sun, the fixed stars, the *primum mobile*—and finally the empyrean, provides a cosmological equivalent for the concave circles of hell or the convex stages of purgatory. As the soul moves upward, propelled by light, the setting is less visibly picturesque than the sublunary perspectives; the personages are more and more luminously depersonalised. But "the general form of paradise (*la forma general di Paradiso*)," though elusive, is not wholly inexpressible. It is expressed by the very magnitude of the spatial arrangements. Processions and pageants wind their way across Dante's path, singing hymns and celebrating festivals; while the white rose, emblematic, sempiternal, and multifoliate, turns out to be a prodigious kind of grandstand, with seats reserved for the

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hierarchy of doctors and saints and all who will have been redeemed at the grand finale.

It is this happiest of conceivable endings that justifies the title of *Commedia*. So far as suspense goes, the drama is virtually over by the time we reach the *Paradiso*, and what happens there is predominantly cast in the lyrical mode. The *Inferno* is epical but static, because its issues have been settled for all time. Paolo and Francesca are bound together for a bitter-sweet eternity, Ugolino can never do more than gnaw upon the skull of his worst enemy, and Satan—no longer walking to and fro—is immobilised in a pit of ice. The *Purgatorio* is the dramatic phase where the outcomes are still being decided, where the spectator Dante becomes an actor and threads his way among the other penitents. But if the *Paradiso* resolves the tensions, it vibrates to its planetary gyrations in a perpetual dance; the choreographic movement of the angels is harmonised with the music of the spheres. After St. Bernard's prayer on behalf of Dante, he completes his pilgrimage with a climactic vision which surpasses our power of speech: "*il mio veder fu maggio/che il parlar nostro*." The fulgurations are too blinding for us to witness the recognition scene, when he beholds the triune face of God. This reunion with the Unmoved Mover brings the poem, in the extra line completing its last tercet, to an acknowledgment of its motivating force: "the love that moves the sun and the other stars (*l'amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle*)."

The poet's soul, caught up in that cyclic motion, will revolve with it forever.

IT WOULD BE HARD to imagine a consummation more remote from the oriental Nirvana, where the reincarnate souls ascend through a long plurality of successive paradises to that final beatitude which can be nothing but oblivion. Fully to understand Dante's afterworld would be, in his own metaphor, squaring the circle. Milton, perhaps because he was so well aware of Galileo's new astronomy while continuing to make a stage design out of Ptolemy's geocentric cosmology, is even more explicit in putting us off. His Raphael is quite elliptical in describing the hierarchs, as they surround the Almighty's throne with ten thousand thousand ensigns:

> *in Orbes*
> *Of circuit inexpressible they stood,*
> *Orb within orb, the Father infinite.*

The Great Architect, so the affable archangel cautions Adam, may laugh at man's ambitious calculations and scientific conjectures:

> *how gird the Sphear*
> *With Centric and Eccentric scribl'd o're,*
> *Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb.*

Milton's direct approach to the court of heaven is introduced by the refulgent invocation to light that prefaces his Third Book. The identification of God Himself with light gathers its special poignance from the realisation that the visionary is blind. Small wonder if the phenomena that he contemplates seem to be less visible than Dante's contemplations. Wisely Milton dwells upon their inwardness: Satan carries "*within him Hell*," and the Archangel Michael leaves Adam and Eve with the comforting prediction of "*A Paradise within thee, happier farr.*" Actually we hear more—indeed we see more—of hell than of the heavens in *Paradise Lost*. The realm of darkness is conceived as a parody of the fields of light, presented at the outset in chiaroscuro and monumentally reconstructed in Pandemonium. The heavenly episodes that we best remember are the battle scenes, "*Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's King*," where the Son is armed in "*Celestial Panoplie*" and the "*dev'lish machination*" of the Adversary leads to the invention of gunpowder. Without accusing Milton of taking the devil's side, we could agree with Blake that he had more liberty to deal with the rebellious infernal forces. Most of Milton's readers are more at ease with the diabolic, we must admit, than with what Allen Tate has called "the angelic imagination."

To be "*lowlie wise*," to "*Dream not of other Worlds*," is Raphael's advice to Adam and Eve: "*Heav'n is for thee too high.*" They have every reason to be content with their "*delicious Paradise*" on earth. The poet ransacks Greco-Roman fable for comparisons to embellish the topography of their garden and to set the "*Silvan Scene*" in the "*woody theatre*" of their tragedy. The charms of nature itself, orchestrating the Fall with a sigh of universal sympathy, have never been set forth with greater artifice. "Properly speaking," Milton declares in a parenthesis of *De Doctrina Christiana*, "Paradise is not heaven." With some consistency he maintains the distinction throughout his works, reserving the term for the Terrestrial Paradise, which in some ways he seems to favour over the celestial heaven—a preference consistent with his Mortalism, his reluctance to consider the

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soul apart from the body. "*O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd/More justly . . . !*", Satan exclaims. He is an untrustworthy spokesman, to be sure, and the Son—inevitably—prefers his Father's kingdom to those of this world in the sequel. Yet if amends are made with *Paradise Regained*, and Christ resists the temptation to which Adam has yielded, the consequence will again be "EDEN *raised in the wast Wilderness.*" The concluding anthem of the angels can promise: "*A fairer Paradise is founded now/ For* ADAM *and his chosen sons.*" But that cannot be other than the internal paradise foreseen by Michael, when he predicts a happier day for the couple departing from Eden.

IF *Paradise Regained*, by virtue of its happy ending, is a comedy in the Dantesque sense, then *Paradise Lost*, with its double fall, is the tragedy of tragedies. As opposed to the trinitarian symbolism of Dante's progression through the three well-ordered Catholic afterworlds, the absence of Purgatory from the Protestant outlook intensifies the polar opposition between heaven and hell, which are in dynamic conflict through both of Milton's epics. If he individualises where Dante systematised, it is because iconoclasm has meanwhile been challenging dogma. The *Divina Commedia* could be read as a guidebook which would help believers to advance from wretchedness to a state of blessedness, as it is suggested in the epistle dedicating the *Paradiso* to Can Grande della Scala. The Miltonic goal is theodicy, a justification of God's ways to man, but its moralistic purpose is tempered by the aesthetic canons of classical art. John Bunyan could offer guidance to striving Christians on the evangelical plane of a popular handbook telling them what they should, or should not, do to be saved: *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*. The practical and plain-spoken manner of Bunyan's allegory seems to be more effective along the road and across an English-looking countryside, where pitfalls are pointed out, than at the terminus, a conventionally gilded evocation of the Celestial City. In his satirical tale, "The Celestial Railroad," modernising the theology as well as the technology, Hawthorne could reverse the direction and send his pilgrims on a grand tour to hell.

The allegorical purport of *The Faerie Queene* is ethical rather than theological. As an idealised picture of Elizabethan England, blending various myths and supernatural motifs into its idealisation of nature, Spenser's Fairyland lies well out of this world yet not quite in the next. Its fabulous terrain is fertile soil for earthly paradises, such as the Garden of Adonis glimpsed in Book III, where the fair Amoret has been "*trained up in true feminitee,*" tenderly nurtured amid the haunts of pagan voluptuousness. In Book II it is the Bower of Bliss, where Sir Guyon, the champion of temperance, climaxes his adventures by dauntlessly resisting and putting down the blandishments of the temptress Acrasia. The sensuous beauty of this "*daintie Paradise*" is invidiously compared with many a Greek prototype—to which Spenser adds, with a touch of puritanic compunction, "*Or Eden selfe, if ought with Eden mote compare.*" Elsewhere, in one of his *Amoretti*, the not quite attainable bosom of the poet's beloved is termed "*the bower of blisse, the paradice of pleasure.*" Paradise, traditionally associated with carnal temptation, thus presents a demoralising ambush of forbidden delights to the virtuous knights of Spenser and his predecessors in Christian heroic romance, Ariosto and Tasso. Those notorious gardens of their respective enchantresses—where Ruggiero is seduced by Alcina in the *Orlando Furioso*, or where Rinaldo dallies with Armida in the *Gerusalemme Liberata*—are decadent and illusory versions of Eden, Ariosto's "birthplace of love."

SUCH ENCHANTMENTS, though malign, are accepted as truly magical. We hear reports of other snares and delusions which, while pretending to the miraculous, were contrived by perverse human ingenuity. Mandeville has an anecdote about a certain rich man, living on the eastern Isle of Mistorak, who redecorated his castle and grounds in that paradisal style to which we have by now become accustomed: precious stones, splashing wines, musical accompaniments, delicacies served by damsels and striplings dressed in cloth of gold to simulate angels. The subtle deceit, as Mandeville phrases it, was to befuddle the knightly visitors into laying down their lives for their host, in the belief that they would be thereby entitled to spend an eternal life on his premises. This might serve as a cautionary example of a fool's paradise. Those who were disinclined to be taken-in might become wary, not merely of their over-enterprising fellow men, but of institutions and doctrines which put off the fulfilment of their glittering promises until after death or else protracted it into an endless future. Was immor-

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tality to be taken for granted, or was it an illusion? What did men know about heaven, after all, they asked themselves in their Enlightenment? An article in the *Encyclopédie* pointed out that the notion of a paradise in the sky had been rendered obsolete by modern astronomers; if *le paradis* existed, it was "not a place but a change of state." As for the Millennium, it supplied an occasion for some of Gibbon's most withering ironies:

> So pleasing was this hope to the mind of believers, that the *New Jerusalem*, the seat of this blissful kingdom, was quickly adorned with all the gayest colours of the imagination. A felicity consisting only of pure and spiritual pleasure would have appeared too refined for its inhabitants, who were still supposed to possess their human nature and senses. A garden of Eden, with the amusements of the pastoral life, was not suited to the advanced state of society which prevailed under the Roman empire. A city was therefore erected of gold and precious stones, and a supernatural plenty of corn and wine was bestowed on the adjacent territory; in the free enjoyment of whose spontaneous productions, the happy and benevolent people was never to be restrained by any jealous laws of exclusive property.

Gibbon's periods are far more elegant than the revivalistic strains of "The Sweet Bye and Bye," but the same note of sceptical reservation can be heard in Joe Hill's burlesque: "*You'll get pie in the sky when you die.*" Stated more positively, the implication was a socialistic demand for more pie on earth—or, as Heinrich Heine sang, for roses and myrtles, beauty and happiness, yes, and green peas for everybody, leaving the heavens to the angels and sparrows.

> *Ja, Zuckererbsen für jedermann,*
> *Sobald die Schoten platzen!*
> *Den Himmel überlassen wir*
> *Den Engeln und den Spatzen.*

WE DEFLECT OUR GAZE from the welkin, then, to the garden once more. Some of the learned authorities speculated that the Terrestrial Paradise had been washed away by the Flood; others argued that it had survived because of its position on a mountain-top. Enoch and Elijah still lived there, it was believed, having been translated bodily; and Alexander the Great had vainly tried to storm the verdant summit. Travellers' tales connected the territory with the mysterious land of Prester John. One of Columbus' favourite books, the *Ymago Mundi* of Pierre d'Ailly, gave it a standing in fifteenth-century geography and summed it up in a reminiscent phrase as *"locus amoenissimus."* Hence Columbus came to feel that he had all but rediscovered it during his third expedition in 1498. He assumed that it was in the Orient, of course, as he assumed that he was: "in the ocean sea at the end of the East." The actual spot that he seems to have had in mind was somewhere near the peninsula of Paria, at the mouth of the Orinoco River, in what would soon be named the Spanish Main. Believing that fateful tract could not be entered without God's permission, he did not investigate further; but in an eloquent letter to his royal patrons, Ferdinand and Isabella, he marshalled the observations and precedents in favour of this conclusion. He was now of the opinion that the earth was pear-shaped rather than round, that the newly discovered hemisphere was shaped like a woman's breast, and that the Earthly Paradise was located at a high point corresponding to the nipple.

Samuel Eliot Morison, in his compelling biography, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (1942), explains how Columbus might have arrived at such a theory by miscalculating his altitudes. Yet there may have been a deeper impulsion at work—not unrelated to that primal urge which prompted Edmund Spenser to describe his lady's breasts as a bower of bliss—so that Columbus, seeking the aboriginal site of human generation, would nostalgically envisage it as a maternal archetype. At all events, it inspired Bishop Las Casas, the sixteenth-century chronicler of the Indies, to an erudite digression authenticating the Earthly Paradise and distinguishing it from pagan superstitions about the Elysian Fields. Later voyagers, notably Amerigo Vespucci, would localise it southward; Richard Hakluyt, in his chronicles of the English navigations, would place it south of the equinoctial line (Drayton, in his ode addressed to Hakluyt, hailed Virginia as "earth's onely paradise"). Its role in the discovery and colonisation of Brazil has been canvassed by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda in *Visão do Paraíso* (1959), while its influence upon the relations between Europe and the United States has been studied by Charles L. Sanford in *Quest for Paradise* (1961). With the economic development of the Americas, Eldorado must have seemed a more pertinent image than Eden, and the search for the noble savage had to be pushed ever westward to the South Sea isles. With the decolonisation of post-war years and the emergence of underdeveloped nations, the horizons of primitivistic escape have been closing in upon us. The impact of these changes on the Western

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conscience and consciousness has been registered lately by Henri Baudet in a far-seeing little treatise (1965) entitled—what else but *Paradise on Earth*?

EDEN IS ALWAYS SET far apart from civilisation in space or time. There was a time—already past for Shakespeare's John of Gaunt—when England could be hailed as "*This other Eden, demi-paradise.*" But that green world had totally receded by the epoch of the Industrial Revolution, and Blake's prophetic writings form a programme for messianic revival: to abolish "*the dark Satanic mills*" and to build a New Jerusalem "*In England's green and pleasant land.*" Englishmen impatient for that advent might cross the Atlantic. Among the colonists, William Byrd of Westover sought "the Land of Eden" in the Virginian backwoods, just as Thomas Morton of Merrymount sought a "New Canaan" on Massachusetts Bay. Among the emigrants, Martin Chuzzlewit is lured by a prospectus for the Eden Land Corporation on the banks of the Missouri River; but the "flourishing city" advertised by promoters is as yet no more than a "hideous swamp"; and Dickens' young surveyor, after having nearly succumbed to its fevers, returns to the Old World a poorer and wiser man. The American record is full of other Edens raised in the wilderness with greater success, demi-paradises brought up to date with all the latest conveniences of Utopia. The Edenic impulse, however, has been at odds with the Utopian impetus. Reviewing a book by a German technocrat, J. A. Etzler, *The Paradise within Reach of All Men*, Thoreau sharply recoiled from its campaign for salvation by labour-saving devices:

> Thus is Paradise to be Regained, and that old and stern decree at length reversed. Man shall no more earn his living by the sweat of his brow. All labour shall be reduced to "a short turn of some crank," and "taking the finished articles away." But there is a crank,—oh, how hard to be turned! Could there not be a crank upon a crank,—an infinitely small crank?—we would fain inquire. No, alas! not. But there is a certain dim energy in every man, but sparingly employed as yet, which may be called the crank within, quite indispensable to all work. Would that we might get our hands on its handle! In fact, no work can be shirked. It may be postponed indefinitely, but not infinitely. Nor can any really important work be made easier by coöperation or machinery.

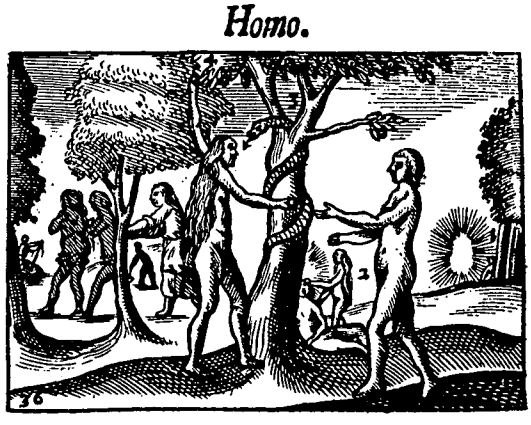
This would seem to be one of those situations where Thoreau stands alone, where the railroad has rushed by Walden Pond, where the crank within has unfortunately been superseded by the push-button without.

"Of course," Thoreau was to jot in his journal, "we do not expect that our paradise will be a garden." His daily life in the woods or on the pond or at the bean-field was more like the hard-working routine of Adam after the Fall. Nor would he have wanted to be exempt from the after-effect of Original Sin upon nature: "*the penalty of Adam,*" as Shakespeare put it, "*The seasons' difference.*" Spring had been eternal before the Fall. Now, after the summer birds, the autumn colours, the winter snows, Thoreau noted in *Walden*: "As every season seems best to us in its turn, so the coming in of spring is like the creation of Cosmos out of Chaos and the realisation of the Golden Age."

IT MAY BE that so exceptional a personality could succeed in internalising his individual paradise. Wordsworth, in a fragment of *The Recluse*, held that anyone could do so under the proper conditions and that such perceptions could be externalised:

> *Paradise, and groves*
> *Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old*
> *Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be*
> *A history only of departed things,*
> *Or a mere fiction of what never was?*
> *For the discerning intellect of Man,*
> *When wedded to this goodly universe*
> *In love and holy passion, shall find these*
> *A simple produce of the common day.*

But this is too abrupt a come-down from the unattainable to the commonplace. Paradise would soon lose its lustre, for most of us, if it



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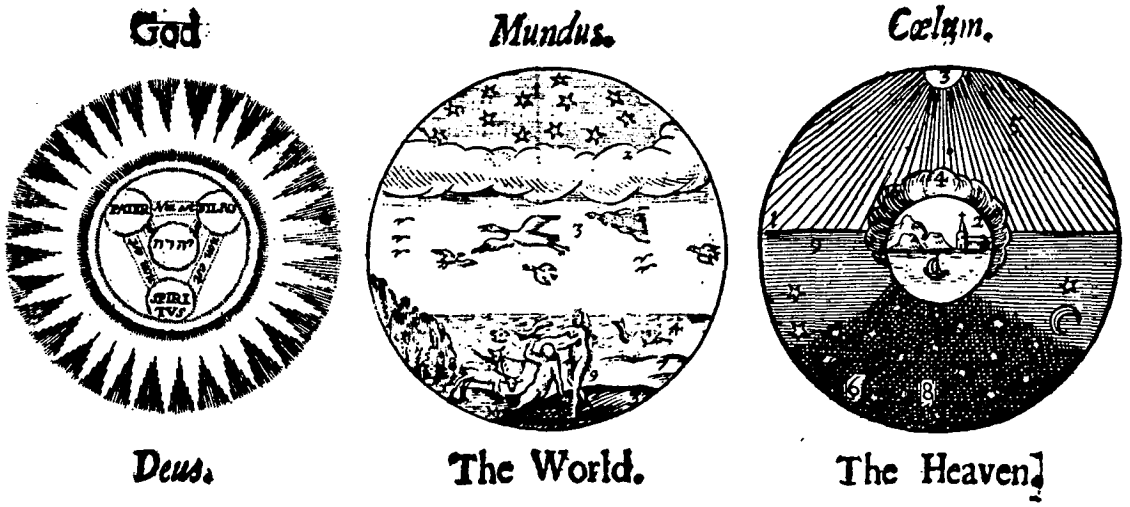
were so accessibly near at hand. It is the impossibility of their quest that makes heroes out of William Morris' wayfarers in *The Earthly Paradise*. The realisation of an unrealisable ideal must forever be projected into the future, just as the sense of retrospective felicity is all the more felicitous because it resides in the past. The truest paradises, lamented Marcel Proust, are those that we have lost ("*car les vrais paradis sont les paradis qu'on a perdus*"). His innocent childhood hours in those Parisian gardens so incongruously known as the Champs Elysées, like the special heaven that lay about Wordsworth in his infancy, were perfect because they were irretrievable except through the nostalgic illuminations of art—the only other world with which Proust ultimately reckoned. Only the artist has the privilege of seeing his personal vision of perfection take tangible form. Hence Poe remarked of Claude Lorrain: "No such paradises are to be found in reality as have glowed on the canvas of Claude."

André Malraux recalls an exchange with Yehudi Menuhin over the question: "What does music most constantly convey to you?" M. Malraux's reply was the single word, "Nostalgia," which he has recently glossed for us with the comment: "The great music of Europe is the song of Paradise Lost." As an aesthetician who is both a modernist and—so it turns out—a traditionalist, M. Malraux would discern the most potent meaning in the evocation of cultural inheritance at a wordless and idealised remove. The moralists, regarding the loss of Eden as a fortunate lapse, *felix culpa*, could look ahead to man's destiny rather than back toward his origins, in the pious hope that paradise could be regained by his moral exertions, together with divine grace. His unwillingness to accept his mortality, along with his desire to participate more actively in the mysteries of existence, to know the unknown, not to say the unknowable, found encouragement among the theologians. Happiness is always in the past or in the future, Schopenhauer has observed, while the present is always cloudy. To which we might subjoin a remark of the Rumanian essayist, E. M. Cioran, that all paradisiacal visions take place in a static world, in a time that is out of time, an everlasting spring or unending youth. Nonetheless they have animated the history of the only world we know with any certainty, luring Columbus on towards a mirage of repose on the very bosom of Mother Earth and mitigating Dante's troubled dreams with intimations of continual love and eternal peace.



Illustrations (4) from: Joannes Amos Comenius, Orbis Sensualium Pictus (1672).

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FILM

God's Bodikins!

By John Weightman

IN THE PLAY by Peter Barnes, *The Ruling Class*, about which I said some rude things last month, there is an English earl who thinks he is Jesus Christ. When someone remarks: "Show us your Godhead," he begins unbuttoning his trouser-flap. This month, in Pier Paolo Pasolini's film, *Theorem*, we are actually shown Christ's Godhead (in effect, Mr. Terence Stamp's), and—like Ionesco who dreamed he was in Heaven surrounded by people speaking Italian and concluded, when he woke up, that, since dreams never lie, he had at least learned that Italian is the heavenly language—we can conclude that Christ has black pubic hair, which, when you come to think of it, was always fairly likely. The lighting is not clear enough for us to see whether he is well and truly circumcised. Precision on this point might have introduced a regrettable racial note into a film that has, apparently, won the approval of part of the Catholic Church. It was safer to dwell on the fair prospect of Christ's various pairs of natty trousers, whether empty or slightly bulging (Christ appears to wear esteemed nature, *die Verehrte Natur*, on the right), and this Signor Pasolini's camera does very lovingly. In fact, Signor Pasolini is obviously well qualified to do an *étude de braguettes* or codpiece symphony, which would be a worthy pendant to Miss Yoko Ono's *Bottoms*. His study of the flies of the Lord certainly makes him lord of the flies.

Pasolini, like Fellini, has a rich, treacly Italian talent, and *Theorem* is one of the most marvellously preposterous films I have seen for a long time, almost every moment of it being deeply enjoyable. I hope he made it with tongue in cheek; if he didn't, the imagination boggles at what goes on inside his head. Let us suppose, at any rate, that it is a conscious work of art and a brilliantly poetic joke about the mixture of homosexual feeling and religious fervour which is so often found in the more artistic areas of the Catholic Church.

The theme is, of course, "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." I have just read, or reread, Jerome K. Jerome's short story, which was published in 1907, and a very genteel and old-fashioned little thing it appears by comparison. Christ, in a long raincoat and an old felt hat, turns up unexpectedly in a boarding-house at 48 Bloomsbury Square and, by the exquisite graciousness of his presence, brings out the better self in each of the inmates. When he moves on, the landlady has become a real lady, the distressed gentlewoman has ceased to be a snob, the middle-aged spinster has agreed to grow old, the flighty girl has decided not to sell herself for money, and the men have given up being various types of bounder. These moderate conversions were all no doubt in keeping with average, English, middle-class feeling before 1914.

SIGNOR PASOLINI'S MYSTERIOUS STRANGER is very different. He is a dazzlingly beautiful youth who, for no apparent reason, comes to stay in a splendid Italian villa on the outskirts of Milan. He says nothing; he just sits or moves about, exuding an intense sexual aura. He looks, indeed, like a placid and slightly soulful gigolo, or perhaps a Billy Budd on dry land, perfectly at home in the luxurious setting. The camera shifts occasionally from the house to the town, and to the huge and hygienic factory from which the family draws its wealth. Then, every now and again, the modern world disappears, to be replaced by a bleak and rolling landscape of grey-green dust, half-hidden by restless clouds; this, presumably, is the earth just after creation, "without form and void." The image seems to occur every time sexual union is about to take place, as if copulation always went back to the beginning of time or had a prehistoric echo, as in a poem I remember once reading somewhere:

Three smart floors above old earth,
On feather beds with springs of steel,
They tied the knot that links the birth
Of future soul with ancient eel....

Since this is 1969 and not 1907, Signor Pasolini's Christ operates directly through the genitals. The peasant maid, mowing the lawn, is driven to distraction by the beauty of his trousered legs and tries to commit suicide. He saves her and lies down with her on her bed. The son of the house, having glimpsed his Godhead when they undress together, sobs with desire and is suitably consoled. The mother, after adoring Christ's underpants, which he has shed to go bathing, lies down naked to intercept him on his return and is duly rewarded. The daughter leads him into her virginal bedroom and bares her breasts. The father and Christ take a drive into the countryside and stretch out among the ferns. Each episode is left slightly ambiguous, in the sense that Christ wears an intensely wise and noble look as the crisis approaches, so that one cannot be quite sure whether he is doing the obvious thing, which normally involves a degree of facial contraction, or administering some peculiar form

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of physiotherapy. The equivocalness is beautifully calculated, with the result that these highly suggestive scenes have the awful fascination of bad religious pictures. Theological language, at least in pre-Enlightenment days, used often to borrow the terminology of human love in an attempt, so it was said, to translate the ineffable. Here, the reverse process is in operation. The explicit fleshiness of the body fills the large screen and has a parody of spiritual meaning oozing from it like sweat. One could imagine no more damning satire on the dubieties of popular, idolatrous religion. This is faith as a phallic fantasy.

THE FUN CONTINUES when Christ is summoned away, as he had been announced, by a telegraph boy who dances with bliss, like a holy idiot. It then appears that *Christus fornicator* is also *Christus redemptor*; he has planted seeds of spiritual rebirth, and gestation ensues.

The maid returns to her village to become a miracle-working saint. She lives entirely on nettle-soup, and sits motionless on a bench or levitates above the chimney-pots. Then she has herself buried up to the eye-balls, so that the tears she sheds for the world will form a living spring. This episode, which is wonderfully photographed, has a kind of absurd poetry. The saint is both ludicrous and touching when she points dramatically to the nettles, as in a mediaeval painting, or hangs splayed out in the sky, like a suddenly solidified television image. What was the point of saints levitating, one wonders, if they just looked like cosmonauts who have forgotten their space-suits? Also, with the sublime thoughtlessness of saints, she has herself buried on a building-site, just under a vast mechanical excavator, which will no doubt uproot her in one movement next day.

SIGNOR PASOLINI'S inspiration falters a little, I think, with the other characters. The son is a budding artist and we have seen him looking appraisingly at reproductions of Francis Bacon's ghoulish figures. Now that he has been divinely sodomised, he has to find something better to express the terrible, yet joyful, meaning of life. Unfortunately, he just repeats some well-known stages of modern art: he invents a form of action painting, then a plain, blue square (Klein?), on which he piddles to express his disgust, and finally a haphazard, blue blot, which must represent the abandonment of art and the acceptance of chance. Perhaps the joke is that a lot of modern pictorial art, when it tries to be consciously metaphysical, ends up as a non-significant happening. But if so, the effect is somehow muffled.

During Christ's stay, the daughter has taken a photograph of him lolling in a deck-chair, in the slack and broken attitude he has in so many pictures of the descent from the Cross. After his departure, she is rummaging through the chest containing her childhood treasures, which include the photographic album, and we think she is about to put away childish things by burying the chest in the garden. However, she runs her finger over the pattern of Christ's limbs in the photograph and falls into a cataleptic trance, with her right hand tightly clasped. Perhaps the divine afflatus passing upwards from those wonder-working trousers has paralysed her arm and propelled her directly into mystic union with the Beyond. Her departure on a stretcher carried by two white-coated attendants is in the nature of an Assumption.

The mother roams about in her little car, picking up handsome youths who whip off their clothes and do what they can for her. It seems to be exactly what Christ did, and in fact one of the youths is approvingly and lingeringly photographed in the nude, in the classic pagan attitude of repose after love. But obviously an Ineffable Something is missing; not all Godheads are equal, since the mother retains her anxious look and finally disappears into a church, as if it were a telephone booth for communication with the divine lover.

The most painful change occurs in the father. He turns his factory over to the workers and wanders off, looking hungrily into the faces of romantic young men with a resemblance to Christ. In the middle of a crowded railway-station, he takes off all his clothes and we see his naked feet padding through the streets and then out into the formless void, which now invades the screen for good. The last sequence shows the nude, hairy, middle-aged body staggering over the wastes and uttering a piercing cry of desolation. If he is Adam, he can clearly do without Eve. It is Christ, in the shape of Michelangelo's David or Leonardo's John the Baptist that he is howling for.

The splendid Italian villa has thus been emptied of its five inhabitants by pentecostal fire, in the form of heavenly lust. Such goings-on would have startled the inmates of 48 Bloomsbury Square, where Christ always kept his long raincoat "tightly buttoned" and, far from being sexy, had a slight hump, presumably through carrying the Cross. But in this day and age, as they say, we can enjoy *Theorem* as an exercise in black humour,[1] an extraordinarily lush and grotesque illustration of the possible weirdnesses of the human temperament.

[1] Since writing this appreciation I have seen Signor Pasolini on television, and am forced to the conclusion that there is no humour in his make-up. So what I took to be an elaborate joke is, on the contrary, neurotic self-revelation.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from Vienna

A Final Solution

"My wife and I have been through all this before—but it is a new experience for the two children," said the grey-haired man who had just arrived at Vienna *Ostbahnhof* with his family and all his worldly goods in four suitcases. Vladimir K., a scientist, a Communist since the 1930s, and until recently a senior civil servant, came from Warsaw, with no money and no passport. In two days' time they were to join a party of other Polish Jews on the next stage of their journey to Israel sponsored by an Israeli aid organisation.

Almost unnoticed and behind a veil of discretion observed by all the officials involved, Vienna has for many months past served as a clearing station for Jewish emigration from Poland. A stop was put to the open "anti-Zionist" campaign at the last Party conference, and the anti-Semitic Moczar group had its wings substantially clipped; but the steady stream has not dried up. The process of purging Poland of its Jewish citizens continues. Of the 25,000 who survived Hitler's slaughter, about 17,000 (according to expert estimates) have either already left the country or applied for emigration permits.

Vladimir K. put off emigrating as long as he could. "I am not a Zionist," he said. "I am a Communist and an internationalist. I grew up in the Polish labour movement. When we were young we spent a great deal of time trying to persuade our Zionist fellow-students that 'the Jewish question' could not be solved nationally, but only on a Socialist basis. But obviously I was wrong...."

In March 1968 he was dismissed from his Ministry, after being violently attacked as a "Zionist" at a Ministry party meeting and, though a recognised expert in his field, he sought vainly for another job. Eventually his savings were exhausted, and he was left with no alternative but to apply to the emigration office.

Those who, in Gomulka's words, "voluntarily abandon their Socialist fatherland" must first of all pay 5,000 *zlotys* each—equivalent to two months' average salary—for the necessary emigration papers. The cost of sending baggage abroad has to be paid for in foreign currency; some are able to have money sent from abroad for this purpose, but 20 per cent is deducted as a special foreign-currency charge. Those unable to raise funds from abroad have to leave with nothing but hand luggage.

Their flat reverts to the government, but first of all it has to be put back into perfect order at the *émigré*'s expense for the benefit of the next tenant. Those who had a university education in Poland have to repay every penny of the cost of that education. Subject to severe penalties, *émigrés* may not take with them testimonials, diplomas, certificates of employment, even their very own books or manuscripts. Thus in his new country the *émigré* has no documentary evidence of his education, qualifications, or experience. Finally he has specifically to repudiate his Polish citizenship. His exit permit, which is valid only for Israel, states that his nationality is *"Jew."*

Like many of those in the same situation, Vladimir K. has no desire to go to Israel. But what other country will take him and his family? In Austria his prospects are slim. Austria is a signatory of the Geneva convention, which imposes the obligation to grant political asylum to "anyone persecuted by reason of race, religion, political opinions, or membership of a particular social group...." If the individual concerned has been granted asylum in another country, the obligation does not apply. Austrian officials interpret this strictly, and they grant the refugees from Poland transit visas only. "You have a permit for Israel," they say, "so go there."

The West German *Bundesrepublik* is rather more flexible but (like Britain and Sweden) in principle grants entry permits only to aliens who can produce evidence of assured employment. Without a passport the *émigrés* cannot wander from one European country to another looking for a job. The United States, Canada, and Australia will not accept "Communists." During the Hungarian crisis of 1956, the Western countries vied with each other in aid to the refugees; but the Jewish tragedy in Poland is practically ignored.

One of the main reasons for this is that everyone concerned treats the wholesale emigration of Polish Jews as something of a top secret. Israel does not want to risk aggravating the plight of the Jews still in Poland by giving it publicity; and Poland has no particular interest in airing the matter either. So the emigration to Israel by way of Austria goes on, shrouded in silence and secrecy. The cost is borne by Israeli and Jewish aid organisations, and the *émigrés* are temporarily accommodated in small

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hotels on the outskirts of Vienna; and in the Polish quarters of the city the talk, as in 1938, is of passports, consulates, visas, and relatives in America who perhaps might be able to "do something."

THE PRESENT-DAY VICTIMS of anti-Semitism are nearly all Communists. Before the war every fourth member of the Polish Communist Party was a Jew. They fled from the Nazis to the Soviet Union and returned to ravaged Poland to help "build Socialism," or so they supposed. As the Party has now adopted a chauvinistic line, the victims of the purges are not only so-called "Zionists," but "revisionists" and "intellectuals" in general. It is not unusual for these to be the same persons.

Characteristic of this is the choice of accused in the latest trials of alleged "ringleaders" of the recent student unrest. Adam Michnik, Henryk Szlaifer, Basia Torunszyk and Wiktor Gorecki are all Jews—and the children of noted veteran Communists. Torunczyk *père* was the commander of the Polish Dombrowski Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. After their arrest in the spring of 1968, their interrogation was conducted with unconcealed anti-Semitism, but at their trial in February no reference was made to their origins. But, as before, the last volume of the official, state-sponsored Polish *Encyclopaedia,* which was printed while the anti-Zionist campaign was at its height, cannot be published, the reason being that it was noticed that the article on "ANNIHILATION CAMPS" included the statement that most of those slaughtered in them were Jews. As before, the new edition of the works of Poland's famous Marxian economist, the late Oskar Lange, cannot be published because it quotes a banned Jewish professor, Wladimir Brus; and the dismissal of Jews from positions in universities, the civil service, the party apparatus, and the economy goes on.

"Soon," as Vladimir K. says, "the Jewish question in Poland will have been finally solved."

Barbara Coudenhove

The Days of Convergence Are Numbered

A Critique of "Non-Ideological Fog" — By COLIN WELCH

ADMIRABLY PLEASANT, reasonable and scholarly as it was in tone, Mr. Robert Skidelsky's article in your recent issue ["Politics is Not Enough," ENCOUNTER, January] must have infuriated a whole lot of people. At any rate, it should have done; and, if it didn't, this too is highly significant. It must have infuriated anyone who admits to being (or proudly proclaims himself to be) any sort of socialist; it must equally have infuriated all those who would repudiate any such suggestion with rage or regret. And if in fact it didn't annoy many people, this suggests that most people in this country really haven't the foggiest idea of what they are, or think, or feel, or of what sort of society they want to live in; that they really *do* live in the sort of non-ideological fog of which Mr. Skidelsky seems to approve and which has reduced us as a nation to a sort of dithering paralysis, unable to decide between any of the conflicting opinions with which, as Mr. Skidelsky incongruously points out, we are confronted.

Admirably pleasant, reasonable and scholarly also is Mr. Skidelsky's face, portrayed on your front cover. Yet how can we political partisans contemplate it without wondering ruefully, whom is *he* laughing at? Who but us, with our silly little ideological quibbles, our "distorting spectacles," our narrow class, group or even individual interests, our hostility and contempt for things like the *Back Britain Campaign,* our silly party rivalries, our "refusal to work together" to deal with great problems "constructively and on their merits," our "emotions" which anchor our intellects firmly on one side or the other? What tiresome people we must seem indeed—prevented by all these trifling, dispensable and easily remediable defects from discerning that great non-partisan vision of the national interest which inspires Mr. Skidelsky!

May I speak up for all committed political partisans, for the socialist as for the other sort? I have at least this right to do so: that, despite what Mr. Skidelsky roundly declares, I do not immediately question the good faith of most of my opponents (or Mr. Skidelsky's, for that

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matter). I do not assume that they are motivated by narrow "class, group or individual concerns," and would be shocked if they thought I was; nor would I automatically place Mr. Skidelsky, as by his theories I should, in the exact middle of the social structure. We respect, on the whole, the disinterestedness of each other's motives; and why not, when half the Labour Cabinet is composed of middle or upper-class people, far "smarter" some of them than I am, and when half the working class votes Tory? What narrow concept of class, group, or individual concerns can really deal with such phenomena?

FROM WIDE ACQUAINTANCE with socialist writings and persons, I am satisfied that all those worthy of the name are genuinely convinced that socialism will be in the best interests of all of us, of me as well as of them—yes, even of all the wretched capitalists themselves, who will at last be delivered from unworthy and degrading bondage to unproductive greed. And I too am convinced that the reverse of socialism—capitalism, a free market economy, a free society, call it what you will—is in the best interests of all, yes, all, including the poor and the sick; and that it can be so adjusted without the slightest treason to its nature as to make socialism in practice look by contrast ridiculous and petty.

So both of us are in fact already devoted to the national interest as we see it; yet, alas, we see it in quite different ways, in terms of different and incompatible means to different and incompatible ends. And this is why, without really being quite as despicable as Mr. Skidelsky thinks us, we cannot all enrol under his hospitable national banner.

To illustrate some of our difficulties may I discuss for a moment the problem of "growth"? This question is raised by Mr. Skidelsky himself, who thinks it for some reason as important today as unemployment was in the 1930s. Both problems, moreover, in his view "cut right across party lines" and "have very little to do with the permanent political battle."

> When questions of this kind [says he] came to dominate the political agenda, it always seemed regrettable to politicians like Lloyd George that the demands of party conflict should separate all those willing to deal with them constructively and on their merits.

We may surely concede that all reasonable men are agreed that the excessive unemployment of the '30s was deplorable, that growth is generally desirable, that the one should have been if possible reduced or relieved and that the other should be fostered. Yet beyond these points we are all again at loggerheads.

Even the past divides us to some extent. Many of us can understand and sympathise with the scruples and hesitations which prevented the politicians of the '30s from "dealing with" unemployment. We may see how some of these scruples must have seemed valid at the time, while others actually were valid then, or are always valid. The prejudice in favour of balanced budgets, for instance, was not wholly irrational; nor was the desire to keep the value of money stable. There are those of us, moreover, who must have very grave doubts about some of the remedies proposed by Mr. Skidelsky's heroes of that epoch—Lloyd George, Mosley, Boothby, Bevan, Macmillan and the rest. Most of these men advocated widespread nationalisation and the rigid control of an economy effectively isolated from the rest of the world; Mosley, driven on by a logic which plainly frightens Mr. Skidelsky himself, advocated even more drastic measures. Mass unemployment was a terrible scourge: there are worse evils, however, as Hitler's régime shows, and we eventually conquered unemployment (perhaps not permanently) without embracing them.

The present naturally divides us even more. Let us set aside for the moment all unworthy doubts as to whether "growth" as such is really any more a fit or meaningful objective for a healthy nation than it is for a healthy child. Is it not rather something welcome which just happens, not an objective to be consciously pursued, but the natural consequence of a sensible regimen—good food, exercise, fresh air? Let us assume it, however, a desirable aim. We cannot just shout at ourselves, *Grow!* The question is, how? By less government intervention or more? By less state ownership or more? By more regimentation or less? By more protection or less? By more investment abroad or less? By fostering heavy industry or candy floss? By higher profits or higher taxes or higher wages or—one could go on for ever.

And there is always another question: at what cost? At what cost in personal freedom, for instance? And, if at any such cost, can we be sure that growth would actually be served by whatever sacrifice is demanded?

Have these questions really "very little to do with the permanent political battle"? Are they not its very substance, what it is all about? Surely these are the points at which opposed concepts of the national interest meet and fight.

TO MR. SKIDELSKY, those of us who carry the rival banners are obviously absurd and petty. We are not "the best people in every party," who were felt by H. G. Wells' Lord Evesham so much to "converge." Not from our

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squabbling ranks are drawn the "great politicians" who, according to Henry Fairlie, must have a "cross-bench mind."

> It is scarcely an exaggeration to say [so Mr. Skidelsky puts it] that the best men in all parties, while forced with varying degrees of conviction into the public postures of the party game, have always cherished a belief in the possibility and desirability of working together to solve national problems.

We are the nasty little men who force these Olympians into these degrading "postures." And when the great ones want to play football between the lines on Christmas Day, it is we who squawk angrily that the war must go on.

Let us defend ourselves, we partisans, first against the implicit charge of factious spite. We may not like the word "converge"; yet many of us ("the best men in all parties," as I see them) do try to understand why our opponents feel and act as they do and to maintain a civilised dialogue across the rift. We recognise our common membership of the same body politic. We seek to convert from error rather than to exterminate or subdue. We can even, thank God, be personal friends, sundered by politics but by nothing more important. Again, we may object to the idea that the best men of all parties "converge." Yet suppose Mr. Skidelsky had said not that the best men converge but that the British, with their passion for compromise and their dislike for all clearly stated positions, have long regarded as the best men those who actually *do* converge—well then, we would have had to recognise, albeit with gloom, a great though perhaps dying truth.

With gloom, yes—for our picture of the political scene over the past fifty years differs sharply from Mr. Skidelsky's. It is almost the opposite. His is one of great non-partisan figures prevented by the sordid strife of their various followers from getting together and "dealing with national problems on their merits." Our picture is rather of a country governed, despite the sordid strife, more or less continually by "convergers." Yes, indeed. For were not Lloyd George and Ramsay MacDonald certainly convergers, certified as such by Mr. Skidelsky himself? And was not Baldwin too, most of the time? Did not Chamberlain bid us not to be frightened of the word "socialism," and introduce all that protection and all those marketing boards, arrangements aptly characterised as "bourgeois socialism"? Churchill, too, was a Skidelsky-endorsed converger; so was Macmillan, and Eden's credentials are just as good. Sir Alec converged like mad. We may grant two arguable exceptions, Bonar Law and Attlee, though the Tories later converged leftwards to endorse and preserve what the doctrinaire Attlee had done. We have thus been governed by men who, whatever they called themselves, whatever postures they assumed in opposition or whatever noises they made, nearly always turned out in office to be more or less much of a muchness, neither wholly socialist nor wholly non-socialist but middle-of-the-road mixed-economy men, leaning perhaps slightly this way or that yet always ready to deal with problems (if at all) "on their merits." "The impression is growing that whatever people vote for, the policy will be the same." Mr. Skidelsky appears to complain of this: what on earth is he grumbling about?

Now here I must concede Mr. Skidelsky a point. I cannot conceive of anything worse than alternating quinquennial governments composed of rigidly opposed doctrinaires; one government socialising everything, the next desocialising everything, the next socialising everything again, so that the country is in a constant state of barren flux and convulsion. If government by convergers could be shown to have saved us from this, we would be very much in their debt.[1] Nor is "debt" a purely rhetorical term: for we are now paying it.

Mr. Skidelsky points to "our present malaise," "our present discontents," to the threat of "a rapid and irreversible decline, and with it the violence which always accompanies despair." This picture seems to me just and in no way ovedrawn. It is a vivid way of stating where we stand after fifty years of convergent government. We live in a land in which the disciplines of capitalism, its carrots and sticks, have been to a great extent abolished; the conditions in which it can operate successfully no longer prevail.[2] Yet the disciplines of socialism (whatever they are—disagreement is rife) have not yet been introduced. As a result our economy flounders without hope or coherence from one crisis to the next. This sorry state of affairs is the legacy to us not of politics in general, as Mr. Skidelsky suggests, but of a certain *sort* of politics—the convergent politics which he favours and of which Mr. Wilson, despite his general disrepute, is the latest representative.

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[1] In fact, it cannot, as the example of post-war Western Germany shows. In that belatedly fortunate land a non-convergent old-fashioned liberal government has by its practical success converted the Social Democrats from Marxists into *bons bourgeois*. Our Tories were given thirteen years to do likewise, but by converging muffed their chance.

[2] For what these are, see Professor Joseph Schumpeter's great work, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942).

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(Whoever may think Mr. Wilson is unarguably a socialist is not likely to be a socialist himself!)

Why convergence makes such a mess of things can hardly be better illustrated than by an examination of that wretched phrase "on its merits," so dear to Mr. Skidelsky and his "best men." If you can conceive of any political or economic problem which is absolutely isolated from all other problems, you do indeed have a problem which can be dealt with on its merits, on its own merits and no others. Yet in the real world there are no such problems—none whatever. No problem is an island. Everything is related to everything else. A move here, a decision there, no matter how trivial, will set in train an innumerable succession of effects. Control the price of a certain type of screw, and you may cause in the fullness of time unemployment among tomato growers; intervention at one point may—rather, will—necessitate further and bigger interventions at numberless other points *ad infinitum*.

Thus any politician who really wants to deal with a problem on its merits—on *all* its merits, remote as well as near—is faced with the daunting task of predicting and taking into account effects which, being infinite, are beyond the unaided grasp of any human mind—yes, and beyond that of any machine or "model" of the economy too: for these can only function correctly when some human mind has fed into them *all* the correct and relevant data. Thus the on-its-merits politician is swiftly reduced either to dithering indecision or, worse, to the sort of hasty off-the-cuff Wilson-style arbitrary gimmickry which can only increase the prevailing chaos. The energetic on-its-merits man will naturally choose the second alternative. In his case each hasty ill-considered intervention will lead to the necessity for further hasty ill-considered interventions. By each such intervention the area of state direction will be enlarged, the area of private freedom curtailed. He may not desire these ends; if so, we may call him an "involuntary socialist"—a sobriquet which also fits Mr. Skidelsky and the best of his best men.

SURELY IT IS ONLY THROUGH the spectacles supplied by some sort of ideology that any ordinary politician can see at all, however fitfully and partially, what the merits of any problem really are. By "ideology" I don't necessarily mean anything very high-falutin': it might be a subtle and all-embracing theory of society, or just some vague idea of "what sort of Britain I want to see"—spontaneously growing or consciously expanding, free or controlled, and so forth. It is only some theory or attitude of this kind which will enable him to put each problem into its proper context, to communicate with his colleagues, to foresee the sort of consequences which may flow from any decision, and to make sure, above all, that the solutions to different problems are coherent and compatible and do not foul one another.

Mr. Skidelsky, incidentally, is obviously distressed by the fact that some ministers may be "duds"; he poses questions which he regards as of prime importance—"How do we get the right Minister in charge of a department? How do we get a Prime Minister who is capable of facing up to the challenges of his office?" Certainly *he* needs supermen; and I have tried to indicate why. Would he not be wiser to accept the fact that some politicians are always likely to be duds, and that some of those who in opposition looked least like duds turn out in office to be the worst duds of all? Nor do I find this prospect really depressing; for even a dud, equipped with reasonable principles firmly held, can trace his path through the administrative maze, can tackle problems which would otherwise defeat him, can take sensible decisions and defend them.

By saying "sensible decisions," of course, I dodge an issue which Mr. Skidelsky also dodges. One can really only say "sensible within a particular context." It is Mr. Skidelsky's implicit contention that there are in every problem only one set of merits, clearly discernible to all the "best men." Is life so simple? Do not different ideological spectacles reveal different sets of merits in the same problem? Confront a socialist and a non-socialist with the same problem and they should (if they are operating properly) react in quite different ways. The socialist will see a socialist solution to it; this will have consequences, all of which he may not be able to foresee; yet he knows (or thinks he knows) what sort of consequences they will be, and can envisage socialist solutions also to these; and thus, stage by stage, he proceeds towards his goal—a socialist Britain. Substitute the word non-socialist for socialist in that passage, and you will see his opponent at work.

BRITAIN'S TRAGEDY is never to have chosen between these two different and quite incompatible sets of merits. Unready to pay the price of either, she has deluded herself with hopes of getting, without payment, the benefits of both. In this delusion she has been encouraged by her convergent leaders, for whom the collective name Butskell was once coined; perhaps Wilth or Healson would now be more appropriate.

By this sort of leadership, if I understand him, Mr. Skidelsky appears at once fascinated and (at least by its results) repelled. He, too, has a choice to make. May I help him? He com-

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plains that "party rhetoric no longer reflects... the issues which people care about and want to discuss." Well, there is one man who does seem to reflect these issues. He is not a converger, but the very opposite: so vigorous a partisan, indeed, that his own convergent party leadership, unable to digest him, has spewed him forth. I refer, of course, to Mr. Enoch Powell, and surely we need not support him at all (and honestly I don't support him all the way, not on race anyway) to welcome in him, at last, a person who offers something quite new. The British seem to like him, anyway, to an almost embarrassing extent. And that is why I wonder whether the days of convergence are numbered.

Beyond the Moon

ALL CHANGED, *changed utterly/A terrible beauty is born*... would no doubt be an exaggeration. Still, that voyage, those visions, moved the public almost unreservedly. W. H. Auden has commented that Apollo 8 cannot change the mind of man. In one sense this is clearly true; the malleability of our most deep-set drives is a delusion of the age. But still, the human mind can be re-directed, shown new perspectives.

One English literary intellectual, writing in ENCOUNTER seven years ago, remarked, "space exploration is not yet emotionally permissible. ... To find the advent of the space age premature, and therefore alien and repulsive, is the proper reaction of any sensitive man."

Perhaps permission has now been issued for the Space Age to start, but it seems extraordinary that anyone brought up in modern times should ever have found that it came as a shock. Margaret Mead puts forward as typical of the "generation gap" the supposed inability of any but the young to grasp the facts of space exploration. I myself joined the British Interplanetary Society in 1946 and have been a member ever since. Perhaps this is exceptional. But many more must be unable to remember a time, certainly since reading Verne and Wells at the age of eight or ten, when it was not part of their own perspective of the future. Of an even earlier period Orwell remarked, in his essay on H. G. Wells, what a splendid experience it was for a boy to discover "this wonderful man who could tell you about the inhabitants of the planets... who *knew* that the future was not going to be what respectable people imagined."

The idea of space flight, as of adventure and exploration in general, is in a sense child-like. It is in childhood that certain components of the adult human being are established—the sense of wonder and intellectual curiosity—while self-consciousness and introspection are added in adolescence. But it is absurd to judge the value of part of the finished product in terms of how soon or how late it was screwed on. What is provided in childhood is an essential part of the complete adult. Only those whose adolescence has been such an intense experience that it has burnt the bridges to childhood are without it, and they are as incomplete as a purely childish adult would be. It is adolescent priggishness and self-importance which objects to Apollo.

For, with all the general approval, there has been enough niggling to show that criticism has been stunned only, not killed. When the flight plan was announced the sour attitude of the alienated intelligentsia in New York was expressed in continual rumours that N.A.S.A. had approved it without adequate thought to safety. This is part of a wide-ranging animus against the administration and technology in general, and it was of course entirely false, as anyone who has followed the procedures will know. Absolute safety is obviously unattainable in a flight of this sort, but what is so unpleasant is that if an accident had occurred there would have been a great deal of very nasty *Schadenfreude*, including some in England. Colonel Frank Borman has said that there are almost bound to be failures and casualties on future flights; when they come, the voices of revulsion will be loud.

APOLLO 8 followed closely on a lavish film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, whose book version is now out in paperback.[1] The real and the imaginary voyages interestingly contrast with, and complement, each other.

Last summer I was one of the speakers at a Conference on Science Fiction at the University of Sussex. It was mainly notable for the intrusion of a number of persons quite uninterested in science fiction, but wishing to take it over and turn it into another of the trendy non-arts. Haranguers who could scarcely form the word "Heinlein" had no difficulty with "audio-visual"; and there were many explanations about a "New Wave" in science fiction which was employing, it seemed, just the same material as its equivalent in mainstream fiction —pornography tempered by incomprehensibility.

Those genuine science-fiction writers who

[1] Arrow Books, 5s.

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have lapsed to some degree into experimentalist prose were embarrassed by their more peculiar allies. They justified their own retreat by talk about "inner space," which seems to mean abandoning *sf* for the novel of introspection, a quite legitimate move so long as it is not misrepresented. Anyway, one thing on which all the writers, normal and abnormal, were agreed was that the film *2001* was not good. The non-trendy disapproved of the meaninglessness of many of the apparently "symbolic" bits. The trendy disapproved of spacecraft scenes, which one well-known writer described to me as "no more than a Pan-Am publicity or training film of the future. . . ." What the two complaints had in common was in effect an objection to the self-indulgence of the director (Stanley Kubrick), who in both spheres simply let himself go on and on without restraint where severe cuts were called for. This lack of discipline is indeed a main fault of most recent art. The man who produces the artefact is not submitting it to an audience, but imposing it on them. As Philip Larkin has remarked of poetry:

> The cash customers of poetry, therefore, who used to put down their money in the sure and certain hope of enjoyment as if at a theatre or concert hall, were quick to move elsewhere. Poetry was no longer a pleasure. They have been replaced by a humbler squad, whose aim is not pleasure but self-improvement. . . . If the medium is in fact to be rescued from our duties and restored to our pleasures, I can only think that a large-scale revulsion has got to set in against present notions.

The space scenes are indeed beautifully filmed. This technical perspective was always Kubrick's *forte*: it is ideas that don't suit him. Nor would it be true to say that these scenes have been made quite ineffective by the shots from Apollo. (All the same, the *real* view of earth rising over a moonscape is something of a different order again.) And even as to the space ship interiors, surely the trendy writer I have quoted was partly wrong. The director doubtless gave us too much of it; but for anyone who cares for science fiction and really has an interest in the perspectives of time, even a future Pan-Am training film is worth watching in its own right. In general, the true *sf* reader must actually feel an excitement at the mere ideas of standing on another planet or in a future century.

THE RUN OF EVENTS in the film will be worth bearing in mind when we compare it with the book. We see some primitive apemen arsing around for about 20 minutes, latterly in the presence of a mysterious monolith. (One of the apes becomes bright enough to use a bone as a club during this sequence; this was well done and worth five minutes of any viewer's time.)

Then we are in 2001, going to the Moon, where another monolith is found. It turns out to be projecting a radio beam to some point near Jupiter, so an expedition is sent there. Here we have a welcome interlude: a well-done battle on the space ship with a murderous computer, even if the computer's lapse is unexplained. The surviving man, on reaching a third monolith in the neighbourhood of Jupiter, is whizzed, apparently through sub-space, over a very large distance indeed, to find himself and his space ship in a conventional apartment, in which he stands around a good deal, sees himself looking older, and finally whizzes back to earth in the form, apparently, of a foetus, which goes into orbit. This latter portion, tedious beyond compare, produced a remarkable performance from the film reviewers. They found it archetypally moving, symbolic. (Symbolic of what? "O Auntie, one isn't symbolic *of* anything any more. . . .") One reviewer was not prepared, he said, to give away the ending: as an honest New Ripple writer said to me, this didn't need much effort, as the ending had no meaning and made no sense. (Another reviewer saw the craft as going through a mysterious space full of strange eyes: on no hypothesis could the eyes have been those of anyone but the unfortunate pilot!) It now appears from the book that all this Delphic portentousness was a mistake. On the printed page, all the incidents are logically explained. The explanations are not very interesting, but they are at least more interesting than the pointless mystification of the film.

The book is described as "based on the screenplay by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke." It does not mention that the screenplay is based on a story, *The Sentinel*, by Clarke. But whatever the convolutions, credit for writing the book goes to Clarke alone.

CLARKE!—I had tried to join the Interplanetary Society earlier than 1946. I wrote to a Somerset address during the war and received a letter in reply to the effect that the Society was suspended for the duration. The writer very kindly enclosed a copy of the last issue of its journal which had the plans of a moonship on which the dozen or so then members had been working: the capsule was fairly similar to that of Apollo 8, but there were a number of differences in the rocketry.[2] The signature on the letter was that of a young civil servant, shortly to join the R.A.F., Arthur C. Clarke.

[2] This article is reproduced, with understandable pride, in the February 1969 issue of the B.I.S. magazine *Spaceflight*.

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Lèse-Clarke is a grave offence in the world of science writing and of science fiction. And I hasten to plead my record of respect for him, as shown by the fact that he is the only man I have (in my own *sf* novel, *A World of Difference*) projected into the future—as "the legendary Sir Arthur," by now very old, in the year 2007. As technical adviser to the film he has clearly produced some wonderful space shots; and the failures of the film are not at any rate reproduced in the book. But for all that the book is not up to his best standard.

The book's sequence, as against that of the film, is as follows: we find that highly developed beings far out in the universe visited the earth three million years ago and that the monoliths they left on it were designed to improve the intelligence of the apemen, which they succeeded in doing. The monolith on the moon is quite different, simply a signalling device. The mysterious madness of the ship's computer is given a perfectly reasonable explanation. And on Saturn's moon Japetus, the hero finds a vast structure, a gate through sub-space. His arrival in a rather conventional hotel suite is again simple: the entity happens to have picked up that pattern in a television play from Earth. The hero is given further training in intelligence and power, found to be more easily assimilable when he is returned to infant form; and he goes to Earth with the intention of taking over. It is not an especially remarkable plot, but it has no loose ends. (The critic who interpreted the film as an intense dramatisation of cyclic philosophy imagined that the infant or foetus had gone back in time too, arriving on Earth to start the whole process off; he might well have been right on the film's terms, if the film had any terms.)

The process by which the literal meaning appears to have been removed in the film version, and what remains then interpreted as having universal though undefinable significance, can only be taken to reflect a great degeneration in cultural attitudes. It is this sort of degeneration which might, one hopes, be corrected by a great age of expansion, when

the frontier will be reopened, both to the farers
And, just as five hundred years ago,
In the mind too, on the fug of ideation.

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING articles on Apollo 8 appeared in the organ of the Italian Communist Party, *Unità*, on 27 December—that is, written before splashdown. The author, Piero Della Seta, spoke of the voyage as a "gust of fresh air." It was a mistake, he said, to grumble that the huge sums of money involved would have been better spent on earth. The trip would do more than anything to break old habits of thought which delayed necessary change on earth, while the huge strides in technological progress would make their mark here too.

In fact, arguments that the investment in space would have been better spent on other things are unsound on various grounds. The skilled scientists and technicians would have produced very little more food if they had been diverted to the plough: for it was all merely the investment of a certain amount of metal and a large amount of skilled labour. The argument that scientific research would have been better served by investment in other fields is more respectable. It can in part be answered by saying that there is no actual shortage of food scientists or laboratories, or of cancer researchers and their equipment; by pointing to the spin-off from space techniques into the main body of industry; and by the actual direct effects on food production, such as that produced by satellite watch on the great fish shoals. Or more basically, that all research is valuable, and some costs more than others. (Apollo's expense cannot, of course, be judged for this trip alone.) But there is more in it than the direct interests of the particular scientists. In the long run it will all probably be seen less for its immediate "scientific" effects than as a great cultural advance. Such perspectives are often misunderstood, even by skilled scientists. One great astronomer announced the impossibility of heavier-than-air flight at the beginning of the century. Another, 50 years later, said that space flight was impossible. We are only at the beginning of our knowledge, and those who deny the possibility of interstellar flight are speaking to the same brief. The scientific culture has only been in existence for 300 years. What the next 300 or 3,000 years might bring (providing we do not destroy ourselves) cannot be foreseen. But it will certainly include movement in the wake of Apollo 8 out into the surprises of the universe. In a poem (it still turns up in anthologies) written before the first artificial satellite I said, and would repeat, as putting the point better than I could in prose:

Pure joy of knowledge rides as high as art.
The whole heart cannot keep alive on either.
Wills as of Drake and Shakespeare strike together;
Cultures turn rotten when they part.
True frontiers march with those in the mind's eye:
The white sound rising now to fury
In efflux from the hot venturi
As Earth's close down, gives us the endless sky.

Robert Conquest

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London Commentary

The Black Mood

By Stanley Henig

IT WAS ONLY a decade ago that fierce intellectual discussions were raging on the future of the Labour party. In those polemical days, articles in ENCOUNTER, notably by Messrs. Crosland and Crossman, played a considerable role. The subjects of these controversies were never really settled: they were rather swept aside by the electoral victories of the mid-1960s. Today, the party is in an even greater state of disarray than it was in 1960. Throughout the country the party machine, starved of members, workers and money, is virtually non-existent. At the local level, Labour hardly controls any important authorities. Cabinet Ministers have taken to public bickering: some of them clearly have one eye on the possible leadership of the party when it is in opposition. Worst of all, virtually nobody in the Parliamentary Labour party and no serious outside observer gives the government any real chance of winning the next election.

The scenario is thus set for fresh discussion in two years' time on "Must Labour Lose?," "Can Labour Win?," "Labour in the Affluent Society," etc. Perhaps, though, one ought not to wait that long. If Labour does go out of office next year, then it could be for a very long time. The sooner a start is made on talking about the future the more likely an early come-back. In any case, I am not by nature a pessimist. If one is realistic (and, perhaps, cynical) enough to appreciate the volatile nature of electoral support, then even at this thirteenth hour the government could conceivably recover. Indeed one need not put this quite so tentatively. Labour has a maximum of two years before the next election. The economic state of the country has, in many ways, undoubtedly improved. It is perfectly feasible for a party to pull up twenty points in the polls with the right governmental approach. It is on this last aspect that doubts really persist.

Most of the discussion of what has gone wrong has concentrated on policies. This is peculiarly unfortunate. Labour has a traditional and cherished myth that political success can be measured by the number of reforms and the volume of legislation. ("Socialism is what the Labour Government does," Ernie Bevin used to say.) It is assumed that there will be a positive public response to the sight of Ministers and M.P.s working hard on masses of complicated legislation. From this emerges a conventional wisdom that the government's error has been to have too few (and those not "far reaching" enough) progressive policies. The rest has only been a bit of bad luck with the economy and a touch here and there of some incompetence in its management.

Such a critique is hardly fundamental. Obviously, governmental legislation and decisions have not been faultless. However, the real trouble with Labour is not policies at all: it is rather politics. The Labour party simply does not understand what politics is all about. Confronted with Conservative opponents, who can be ruthless in their professionalism, Labour is too often the well-meaning amateur, type cast as "the nice guy who always loses." In the House of Commons this is peculiarly well illustrated when foreign affairs are discussed. The Conservative vision of the world may well be repellent, but their analysis is frequently accurate. The Socialist vision may be more attractive, but its proponents confuse the vision with reality, and analysis becomes hopeless.

LABOUR'S FAILURE to grasp the realities of political power became apparent in the very first days of the present government. The Prime Minister offered one hundred days of dynamic activity, and Ministers set out on a five-mile race as if it were the one hundred yards dash. Volumes of reforms were produced but they substantially failed to alter the economic and social structure of the country. Had Labour been swept away after only one hundred days, nothing would have been achieved of any permanence. This may not be surprising, but one can ask if the same is not true four years later. Just suppose that during the hundred days, Labour had essayed a single task: to make an alphabetical list of every single civil servant in the country and then to sack every third man. I do not mean this altogether literally, but this kind of approach does at least put political realities into perspective.

Our administrative system gives a large concentration of power to civil servants. Politically appointed Ministers may think they have power; in fact, they only gain responsibility for actions carried out by one block of the bureaucracy. A Minister can fight for power inside his own Ministry, and he may even emerge victorious. To do this, he requires some expertise. He will not necessarily have this as a condition of appointment, and he may well not have time to acquire it before being moved to another job. Obviously, political power is not a static concept, but the electorally victorious party has an uphill struggle when in office. Now this may

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not matter in the case of a party like the Conservatives who simply consider themselves administrators. They operate the civil servants' system. For Labour, a reforming party, it is far more serious. The clash between Labour's often ill thought-out reforms and the administrative machine is far more likely to result in incompetent government than the easy liaison between that machine and the Conservative desire to rule. Before 1964 a distinguished American political scientist came here to make a study of the likely changes if Labour came to power. A senior civil servant told him that he considered this possibility as "the first real challenge to the system" since 1929. How real the challenge was it is hard to say: it is easier to see the victor.

In the past, theoretical Socialists frequently doubted the advisability of assuming responsibility for government. They pointed to the danger of being "contaminated" by involvement with a system which the party really wanted to overthrow. This analysis is sadly apposite to the present situation. Labour Ministers have found themselves in turn defending the pound sterling; preserving (for a time) our role "East of Suez"; refusing to allow parliamentary committees real power to enquire into the administration; and now "reforming" the Trade Unions. The tragedy is that this experience will lead others to conclude that Labour can indeed achieve more in opposition. Once more it will be argued, as Richard Crossman used to, that during periods of relative prosperity vigorous Labour oppositions will have more power for good than weak Labour governments.

Unfortunately, this argument contains a good deal of truth so long as Labour refuses stubbornly to face up to the reality of political power in this country. Since the "commanding heights" we need to control are those of political power, the reforms we should be propagating are those which would change the whole system and machinery of government. This would make it possible for a party which had won an electoral victory to acquire effective political power and through it remould the economic and social structure of the country.

Such considerations are, at the moment, hypothetical. They form the programme for the first year of a five-year-period of office. The present task is to see if there is some slight chance of using the fourth and fifth years to try to win a new term of office.

Perhaps the starting point is recognition of why the Labour party is now in government. Our political system has ensured that the progress which has been possible has arisen from the alliance between the idea of Socialism and the force of organised Trade Unionism. The latter offers the essentials of money and men; the former contributes ideas. Now the Labour party must expect to pay a price for this Trade Union alignment which automatically brings the bulk of the party's popular strength. The criticism of Labour's present leaders is that they assume that the men and money will still be automatic even if they fail to pay the price.

This kind of assumption has led Labour into seeking to administer a Prices & Incomes policy as if they were a national or even a Conservative government. In doing this Labour has become completely the party of administration, responding not to its own internal political pressures but only to the general pressures which operate on the machinery of government itself. Under such circumstances, Trade Unions readily doubt the value of their Labour links. The policy has now reached the ultimate absurdity of disallowing part of the building workers' rise and yet awarding increases to top executives of £2,500 per year. I find it quite impossible—and it would be so even for the most brilliant apologist for the government—to explain to any audience of Trade Unionists how the country's economic position necessitates this kind of approach. At the same time the idea of compulsory reform of Trade Unions is a political absurdity for an unpopular Labour government approaching a general election. A majority of people may well answer "yes" to Gallup poll questions about projected measures, but there is no evidence as to how many votes may be swayed on this issue, and in which direction. To establish the principle of compulsory reform of Trade Unions just before leaving office would stand as an odd achievement of a Labour government.

Perhaps the real essential for the government is the element of discipline. This is precisely what is always advocated for the Parliamentary Labour party, the Trade Unions, and even Labour's National Executive Committee. Membership of a heterogeneous political party does impose certain constraints which may be considered as discipline, but this operates at all levels. It implies that government ministers consult colleagues in the parliamentary party and perhaps listen to their advice rather than that of civil servants. A chief reason for the utter collapse of morale in the Parliamentary Labour Party is its complete failure to function as a caucus close to the centre of the decision-making process. The present leaders set out to make rank and file parliamentarians feel *un*-important. The government determines policy and treats the P.L.P. as just another more or less hostile group to be overcome by the exercise of power. It is rather as if generals considered their own men to be as much the enemy as the

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opposing army. Above all the government must drop measures which are inherently antipathetic to the movement itself. Hara-kiri is not exactly a viable basis for any government. Political assassination (metaphorically speaking) might be. In the context of English politics, I believe it cannot be a Labour government which imposes legal restraints on Trade Unions.

Going beyond this, the government have now to adopt some of the policies which have been pressed on them by their own party and not all of which are necessarily too costly. Some possibilities would be—re-abolition of prescription charges; announcement of a compulsory programme for comprehensive education; the ending of all forms of public assistance to private schools; an increase in pensions to be financed by an increase in surtax; the declared intention of establishing a national minimum wage and equal pay for men and women in the early 1970s; some further cuts in defence expenditure, etc.

Labour cannot win the next election by making a general lowest common factor appeal to everybody, including about twelve million people who will vote Conservative come what may. Labour has to re-discover its appeal to those who do or might support it, and the first task is to re-awaken the interest and support of those who have been activists. The obvious start is to treat these groups as important, which indeed they are shortly before a general election. Above all, Labour leaders have to drop their aloofness which frequently looks like arrogance and seek to create a genuine party spirit. It can be argued that this will not help much in itself: the fate of the party depends on the direction of the economy. This is an over-simplification. If the economic recovery fails to come about, probably nothing can save the government. However, if it does occur (and the present signs are not unfavourable), then Labour must have a party with the spirit to take advantage of the situation. To create that spirit should now be the major task of Labour's leaders.

Return to Prague

"Do not let good people be oppressed. Let everyone speak his truth." JAN HUS

WE ALL COME out of the plane sniffing and slightly suspicious; the everyday greyness of the surroundings and the matter of fact behaviour of the airport employees may be a trap to lull our emotions to sleep. (Did we expect the air to have the mustiness of a prison and the people to have the hunted look of Kafka's *K*?) Passport control is meticulous and slow. My previous Czech entry visas are examined one by one; the last but one—issued at the end of August 1968—is now being cancelled; but it was never valid—or so they told me at the time when I tried to get in, a few days after the invasion.

Milos, a young man I met last year, has been sent with a car to the airport to take me to my hotel.

"Good to be back in Prague. . . ."

"I am glad they let you come back. . . ." While we wait for my luggage I see a friend, the writer Ludvik S., seeing some people off, and I go over to greet him.

"I hope you have not come to bury us!"

"Last time we tried it did not work. We are no longer in the undertaking business." (But what is our business? Voyeurism?)

I go back to Milos and tell him who my friend is. Milos leaves me at once, circles around Ludvik S., staring at him but not saying a word. He comes back very excited. "I have read his books but I didn't know what he looked like. A very brave man—he was in prison for many years. He is not a Communist." Milos waves away a suggestion that I should introduce him and I cannot make out whether out of diffidence or caution.

As we drive into Prague, Milos gives me news of friends and acquaintances. Like most of the Czechs I shall meet Milos feels no bitterness about the people who have left the country, no bitterness or envy; but one senses that somehow these people have gone into some sort of limbo. "*D.* left a few days after the invasion. First went to Vienna, I believe. Is now in Germany, or is it Canada?. . ." Interest is minimal. *D.* now lives in a world which is no longer very real. The Czechs are on their own; they were clearly aware last Spring that no one would help them but now this knowledge has radiated into their bones and given them a mood of detachment towards the West. There is no resentment as there was never any expectation, but the impatient curiosity of last year has given way to a wish to *cultiver son jardin*. For the time being, their past and their rediscovered pride, their present hopes and fears will need all their attention.

ONE IS STRANGELY GRATEFUL to people who behave with some restraint after suffering great loss. History has prepared the Czechs for traumatic shocks. How did they feel in the Spring of 1620 when they had taken on Catholic Europe and the Imperial armies? In London John Taylor was writing *An Englishman's Love to Bohemia: with a friendly farewell to all the noble souldiers that goe from Great Britain to*

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that honorable Expedition. And did the Czechs, later that year, after their catastrophic defeat on the White Mountain, find time to read Taylor's next book *Taylor his Travels: from the city of London, to the city of Prague in Bohemia*?

"Prague is a famous, ancient, kingly seat,
In situation and in state complete,
In Architecture stately...."

Like Taylor, we find consolation where we can and want to believe that the grandeur and grace of Prague are a reassurance against the folly of men and the whims of fate. Are there places where it is easier to be daring and dream dreams impossible elsewhere?

But Wenceslas Square has become a nightmare. An artificial wood has sprung up around the statue of Saint Wenceslas; potted plants, bushes and trees have been moved to checkmate any further suicide at what has become the nation's shrine. Or is it the fulfilment of a forgotten prediction in a Czech Macbeth?

Jan Palach's ritual sacrifice is no longer argued about, analysed, or criticised. It is accepted with a feeling of deep gratitude—the hero's death redeems the tribe. His grave has become the object of a constant pilgrimage; even on the bitterly cold afternoon when I visit the strange, pre-1914 Hapsburg cemetery where they buried Palach there are people by the grave. Two girls of Palach's age, with their mother, after standing in silence for a few moments, set about righting candles and tidying flowers blown by the wind. Their look is one of quiet pride rather than of despair or sorrow.

The next day we go to Lany where Thomas and Jan Masaryk are buried; their simple grave, in a corner of the village cemetery, is covered with fresh flowers. The Czechs, particularly the young, have rediscovered their First Republic and there is now a veritable cult of Thomas Masaryk. Later we visit the Masaryk Museum in the village: an amateurish but moving display of old newspapers, yellow photographs, Thomas Masaryk's riding cap, coat and gloves, his armchair, and many paintings and statues of Czechoslovakia's unforgotten first President. Outside, on the wall opposite the Museum someone has written in large letters: THE NATION WILL REMAIN TRUE TO ITSELF. Meanwhile three Lany youngsters take turns kissing a somewhat unwilling girl in the middle of the snow-covered street. They all look bored.

EVERYONE CHEERFULLY TELLS ME that goods are in short supply, that prices are going up and the country faces bankruptcy. "But at last we have somebody to blame!" By lunchtime on Friday, many offices are empty; many people I know set off for the mountains or go to their country chalets. French wines are on display in many shops; I wonder whether there is a bottle of *Chateauneuf du Pape* still left in Avignon. An economist explains: "They come from stocks we bought quite some time ago. It will help siphon off excessive purchasing power...." The most attractive food shop in Prague is French; it opened just before the invasion and now displays pyramids of half bottles of *Cointreau*. It was always crowded.

Strip-tease clubs have suddenly appeared in Prague. They were not there last year. (Bread and circuses? a consolation prize? or catching up with the times?) Huge photographs of the *artistes*, running the height of two floors, reassure prospective patrons that they will get ample value for their money. Unisex has not yet arrived in Prague. But the night my friends wanted to take me to the only club they thought was worth visiting—for there is already a star classification of the clubs—the girls had gone off to the mountains. We go to a Moravian wine cellar instead; the place is full and we are only allowed in when I claim to be a Yugoslav. "Always room for a brother." We find ourselves sitting at a table where Czech students are entertaining some real Yugoslavs. The latter are clearly embarrassed when we all raise our glasses to *Svoboda*—"Freedom," a very useful word. A man at the next table taps my shoulder and points to some photographs in his wallet. He wants to sell me a statue of Thomas Masaryk.

The young Czechs at our table now debate whether it would have been better to put up a fight against the Russians. "Our Air Force was ready and willing to bomb Soviet tanks! We should have fought—even if only for ten minutes!..." The father of one of the students tries to explain that the whole thing was hopeless. "I know what war means...." The students are not impressed. "We did not fight for our country and now we may have to fight for the Russians on the Ussuri...." There is a widespread rumour that Czechoslovak soldiers may soon be sent to the Soviet Far East. Later one of the students tells me he would rather go abroad for good than fight for the Russians. He is due to be called up in a few weeks.

The young are the pessimists. They have little faith in the régime. They fear it will go from bad to worse, forced to compromise more and more. "In a few months we shall once again be the most loyal and dependable ally of the Soviet Union." They are willing to accept the benefits of the post-January reforms "while they last." But in the long run they fear last year's hope of a democratic socialism will prove to have been an illusion.

Josef B, a young actor, and his wife take me to see *The Joke*, a black comedy film based on a novel by Kundera. It is the story of a student

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in the Stalinist years, denounced by his girl friend, dismissed from the University after a harrowing trial by his fellow students, and sent to a forced labour battalion. When he is released, he tries to take his revenge on the student who conducted his trial, by seducing the latter's wife, only to discover at the end that his tormentor has long been separated from his wife and now lives with a young and attractive mistress. The audience—mainly young people—enjoy every minute of it. They see meanings and symbols everywhere. The film opens on a shot of a clock where wooden figures go round when the hour strikes, and everybody laughs. I ask Josef for the explanation. "The figures" he says "are typical of Socialist Realism...." I feel like a Protestant at a Catholic mass.

DAGMAR IS A YOUNG journalist with a responsible job on one of the leading papers in Prague. After the invasion she was abroad for a few weeks, was offered a scholarship but decided to come back to Czechoslovakia. She admits she is now under some strain. "We have to fight for every paragraph, sometimes for every word. And the fight is not with hard-liners, but with one's realistic colleagues!" We talk of her father, a leading liberal Communist whom I know well. "You must always remember that my father used to be a Stalinist. He is trying to retain a belief in something and it is not easy." And she adds: "My brother and I have never been members of the Communist Party." She has been invited on a lecture tour of Canada by a left-wing student organisation. "I doubt if the Canadians will give me a visa. Pity. It would have been nice to see Canada and stop in London on the way. But I wonder what I could possibly have told my hosts on the Canadian Left which would have pleased them...."

The optimists are found among the middle-aged, liberal (but Communist) writers, journalists and trade unionists. Most of them have a Stalinist past; they are very intelligent by any reckoning and very often first sharpened their pens in the long Soviet campaign against Tito. It may be that at first they only wanted a few limited reforms, a more efficient management of the economy. Without the Russian invasion they might themselves have slowed down the drive for change, and indeed Dubcek might have become a Kadar if not a Gomulka. Now, whether they eventually face victory or defeat, there is no going back for these writers and journalists. They all know they may face arrest any day; they all have a first-hand knowledge of what a police state means; but they are now caught up in an almost religious fervour as they go up and down the country, like Hussite preachers, addressing factory meetings, carrying the good word they can no longer print, keeping the country informed and united, and themselves deriving great moral strength and encouragement from the People they have finally discovered and understood—a communion they had often talked about but never experienced.

I have an appointment with Josef M. Last year he was one of the few Communists convinced that the invasion was coming. He lived in Moscow for several years and even today operates in the very heart of Communist thought and power. I find him looking remarkably fit and I tell him so. "Life has never been so exciting! Now we have a purpose: to continue the struggle for further liberalisation. This is something to live for...." But he knows there are many obstacles and that nothing will be easy. "Some of my colleagues—and they are not pro-Russian—are convinced that we would all be hanging from lamp-posts if the Russians had not come." He is afraid of a divorce between the Party leadership and the people. "In one factory 20% of the Party members resigned last month. Soon only the hard-line conservatives will be left. There will be no need for the Russians to go on pressing for a reduction in party membership." He is very struck by the hatred of the Czechs for the Russians. "I was here during the war and I am sorry to say that the

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feeling towards the Germans was much less violent. . . ."

Over an excellent dinner, in a delightful restaurant (also a post-January '68 development), Ludvik S. tells me the worst is over; the nation has held out. "A few collaborators still have to be ferreted out. But the next crisis will not be in Czechoslovakia. *A chacun son tour*. . . ." He has little hatred but complete contempt for the Russians, whom he finds incredibly stupid. I dispute this view and suggest that maybe the Russians can afford to wait and that their sense of timing for the next turn of the screw may be different from Czech expectations. He remains unconvinced and a good many of his compatriots agree with him. The political bungling of the Russians and their failure to be tough immediately after the invasion have left the Czechs with the conviction that they are dealing with a dull and witless giant.

A LONG WAIT at the airport. The airline provides us with a welcome free meal; I have just exchanged all my Czech currency. I share a table with a middle-aged, self-assured Prague businessman. He is indignant at the behaviour of Czech journalists. "They excite the people instead of telling them to work harder. The trouble is that since 1948 we have pampered the workers so much that we cannot get anything done. They only want to hold meetings and pass resolutions. The Russians have not come for a week-end visit—we might as well get used to it and keep quiet and work!" A realist, a conservative, or an old-fashioned reactionary? In any case another Czech.

Is this the final note? Not yet. It seems that I am fated to meet friends and acquaintances whenever I am at Prague airport. Peter S., another "Hussite preacher," strides along. "So you are going back. . . ." (Why am I so embarrassed?) He is off to Slovakia to spread the good word. "Better go and cheer them up. It is tougher for them than for us in Prague."

An airline employee, who has been most apologetic about the long delays, sees me off with a sad smile. What can I tell him? "Good luck!" "Thank you, we need it. . . ."

Charles Barlow

Après Moi le Dauphin?

Letter from Paris — By RICHARD MAYNE

"C'EST UN GRAND 'relief'," exclaimed a French friend, feeling free to speak *Franglais*, on the morning after April's referendum and the departure of General de Gaulle. I knew what he meant. It wasn't only that nationalism no longer enjoyed so charismatic a champion; that in France, Europe and the Atlantic Alliance reasonable men and measures no longer needed to collide with a sudden, unexpected, and implacable will that seemed deaf to rational argument. It wasn't only that French politics, with any luck, might now become more democratic, less propaganda-ridden, and less irrelevantly distorted by the anachronistic obsessions of a great tragedian. All this might be true; but a sense of loss overlaid it—for some the loss of a hero, for others the loss of a towering opponent whose very stiffness had acted as a prop. At the elections of June 1968 a majority of the French people had said NO to the barricades, to strikes, and the extremist students: they could only do so by saying YES to Pompidou and de Gaulle. This April, they had said NO again—this time to the General. Had they said YES to Pompidou? Time would tell: but the disarray of the Left, which seemed to give the General his opportunity, was in fact his undoing. It gave the French people a chance to say NO without saying YES. With the General gone, it was perhaps their last opportunity; and the sobering realisation certainly tempered their relief.

Nevertheless, the relief was real. Big Daddy had gone—it was disconcerting, sad, and moving in view of what de Gaulle had done for France. But something else had gone too. That something was a sense of boredom, tinged with frustration and distaste. *De mortuis*—or *de victis—nil nisi bonum*: most commentators have been sparing in their criticism. But to understand the French people's reaction it's necessary to be a little tougher.

IF YOU READ ENOUGH newspapers your mind begins to feel like a tired piano. The same old keys are hammered till the strings are slack and the tone's muffled—STUDENTS, VIET NAM, APOLLO, EUROPE, DE GAULLE. This last, in recent years, had become an obsession. Each time that the General gave a press lecture or a deckside chat, the papers filled double-page spreads with "The Allocution of the President of the Republic and the Political and Trade-

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Union Reactions." However uninteresting the speech may have been to a non-French audience, the foreign correspondents had to ferret out comment from London, Bonn, Washington, or Moscow. Those who worked for State-run television often seemed at a loss. "Well, er, as a matter of fact attention here has been diverted by the recent strike/spy scare/race riot/border incident with China." "Er, reactions in this country tend to be, er, rather slow." Not so in Paris, where commentators fell on the text like theologians.

French political journalism has always been analytical. Under the Fifth Republic, it's almost become a branch of cryptography, with General de Gaulle as a setter of crossword puzzles linked in gnomic complicity with his readers. "Unmassive ballot spells resignation, perhaps": the clues were unfailingly enigmatic. Even the truisms—"Europe must be Europe and France must be France"—dissolved into ambiguity, awesome as God's "I am that I am" or Iago's "I am not what I am." The puzzle-solvers gathered in a buzz of conjecture, courtiers construing *obiter dicta,* suitors treasuring glances and stray remarks. Most assidious of all were the Ministers and officials, expounding with ingenious deference the opinions of one man—*"leu Zhénéral deu Gôle."*

Hearing the name pronounced so often and so sacramentally, a foreigner sometimes felt disgusted. How could so many people be so obsequious? Even hostile cartoonists, even parodists, seemed to play the same game. Henri Tisot, the General's uncanny mimic, sometimes diluted his satire with patriotic recitations; but his performances served the Gaullist legend no less than the caricatures that stressed the General's height. Surely, one felt, such an atmosphere couldn't be healthy. Was it even, as critics claimed, actively sinister? In 1958, the General returned to power through a crisis that threatened to become a *coup d'état*: the procedure was legal, but the atmosphere was panic. Soon afterwards came a new Constitution, much contested, and designed to tilt the balance of power away from Parliament and towards the President and the Government. In practice, the tilt went further: in many areas of policy, the President pre-empted Government decision-making. Before long, the new Constitution was revised by referendum alone—a procedure to have been repeated if the Government had had its way, and one that many constitutional lawyers regard as illegal. Even the *Conseil d'Etat*, France's supreme source of constitutional opinion, was known to share this view, although its verdict was not officially published and was officially ignored. For this reason, some Frenchmen questioned the twenty years' "legitimacy" that General de Gaulle once claimed to embody. They looked sourly back on the tactics used by those on the fringes of the old Gaullist "rally"—the extra-Parliamentary, supposedly "non-party" group that supported the General during some of his time in the wilderness. They alleged that the Ben Barka kidnapping, and more recently the Markovitch affair, brought to just below the surface some highly suspect characters and connections; they referred darkly to the *"barbouzes"* (strong-arm secret agents) and their supposed links with the underworld. Edgar Faure, de Gaulle's last Minister of Education, hinted that "fascism" might be a danger to be reckoned with; he did so, moreover, when attacked by Right-wingers said to be close to one of the *Comités pour la Défense de la République* (C.D.R.s) organised by Gaullists to counter last May's disorders. The *appariteurs musclés* or "burly invigilators" recruited to discipline student rebels were similarly said to come from shady quarters; and some of the French police themselves, never over-gentle in dealing with violence even under the Fourth Republic, were likewise accused of acts which, if genuine, reflected badly on the régime. Not only its critics, but even some of its friends, disliked the impression created by busloads of men in uniform stationed in the Latin Quarter; and jokes or complaints about possible telephone tapping were commoner in France than they used to be, or than they are elsewhere. At the time of the referendum, especially after the General's reference to "the army" of his supporters, there were even fears of a pro-Gaullist *coup*.

To recite these suspicions is not necessarily to endorse them. The alternative to de Gaulle in 1958 was not, very probably, a moderate Pflimlin or Guy Mollet Government, but either a Right-wing *putsch* or a civil war. A majority of Frenchmen certainly preferred the new Constitution to Fourth-Republic instability—that "rule by Assembly" which really meant rule by shifting inter-party alliances. They also prefer direct Presidential elections—the innovation brought about by the constitutional referendum that so many lawyers condemned. If the General, as President, overruled his Ministers or made decisions for them, this was most often on foreign policy, which seldom excites the majority of voters; and many of his actions—leaving Nato, wooing Moscow, or delaying British entry to the Common Market—enjoyed general acquiescence if not widespread approval. As so often, he gave noble expression to popular prejudice—an arrangement for full orchestra of the *vox humana* heard in the concierge's lobby or the *café du coin*. As

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for scandals, these were not unknown under previous régimes or in other countries: Britain produced Miss Keeler, Italy the Montesi case, Germany Fräulein Nitribitt, to match pre-Gaullist France's *ballets roses*. French police, finally, have tasks as thankless as those assigned by Mayor Daley; and if some of them resemble Raymond Chandler's Bay City cops, many are likable, reasonable, conscientious men who may be in the wrong profession but can't be blamed unduly if they get angry or scared. Even when you're not being mobilised against young, agile, insulting, and disconcerting student rebels, it's unpleasant to be likened to Himmler's hired assassins or to see on every *métro* wall the slogan "coppers = butchers." If some of the violence-for-peace boys had lived in Nazi Germany, they'd know the shade of difference between Gaullist France and a real police state.

THEY'D KNOW, TOO, why so many of their elders responded to the appeal of the General. A far-from-Gaullist French citizen (an Irish-born widow who lived in France throughout the Occupation) described to me only recently how she listened to wartime broadcasts from London. "They were the voice of hope—and character." After so many clever, over-educated, feeble politicians, de Gaulle stood out at last as a man. Her late husband had argued that he might at length prove dangerous: but at least, in the flux of chaos, he was firm. Wrong about many things, impatient, rather arrogant, deeply solitary and almost solipsistic, too contemptuous of other Frenchmen, still more of other nationalities, and destructive, in his ingrained nationalism, of so many hopes for law and order in the post-war world, the General nevertheless had "character"—a stubborn, not even sensible refusal to bend or compromise where others would fix, arrange, patch up, turn sinuous and willowy and bland. With Pierre Laval as the awful warning—that devious, ambivalent partial self-deceiver who tried to face Hitler with Third-Republic methods, feathering his own nest yet saving something for France and balancing concessions and humiliations against small victories and shreds of tainted honour—with *that* as the alternative, how much better was a touchy old-fashioned military man who simply said No! "The devil is a gentleman, and doesn't keep his word." G. K. Chesterton's line applied aptly to Hitler's pacts with Vichy. They were, or they ought to have been, the last gasp of a characteristic failing—the sophisticated cowardice of the clever. But right on through the '60s the General's seemed one of the few French voices to be raised against pusillanimity. It wasn't always effective: but three times at least it rang out unmistakably. Once was the famous London appeal of 1940; once was the speech that quelled the "barricades" rebellion in Algeria; and once was the four-minute broadcast that deflated the hopes and fears of May 1968. Agree or disagree with the General's version of *les événements*, fear or desire his overthrow, no one could fail to realise that this, like Brutus, was a man. And because just over half of France was more scared than exhilarated by last year's incipient anarchy, a few firm words once more weighted the scale of history. The magic had worked again for the last time. Could it be needed again?

FEW FRENCHMEN BELIEVE—although many obscurely fear—that last May's disorders will be repeated. Surprise was an essential element in that explosion: the Government, and public opinion, were unprepared. Today, the so-called "forces of order" are ready. New tactics have been evolved to prevent, divide, and contain student violence. Edgar Faure's university reforms, despite their limits, have jerked the academic Establishment into new postures; and many students themselves admit in private that their revolt got something out of their systems. "Now," said one ex-*enragée*, "we're a little bit nervous of the responsibilities we've won." To anyone fresh from British or American universities, some of the gains seem minimal. "This is one of our great achievements," a law student told me, pointing to a new wooden drawbridge joining the professor's rostrum with the audience's benches in the rue d'Assas *Faculté de Droit*. "Some of the younger teachers actually take the microphone and sit with the students," he added with wondering pride. "Look at all those posters on the walls!" exclaimed a taxi-driver, "Disgusting mess!" Previously, students could only put up announcements approved by authority and imprisoned in wire-covered notice boards. A *chargé de cours* was enthusiastic: "At least they liven up the grey concrete." I mentioned my taxi-driver: wasn't he a "worker," didn't this show that the social gap remained? "Only an artisan," was the reply. Still, the atmosphere's notably freer, and it's certainly possible—in my experience—for lecturers to get a hearing. The pot has boiled over once; and although it still simmers, the heat's no longer so fierce.

The same applies, moreover, in the factories. Many Communists were furious when the younger workers forced their hand last summer; and although the March negotiations on revised wage rates broke down and led to an all-union strike, this was much more a repetition of earlier one-day demonstrations—organised, disciplined, and short-lived. The "totalitarians" so

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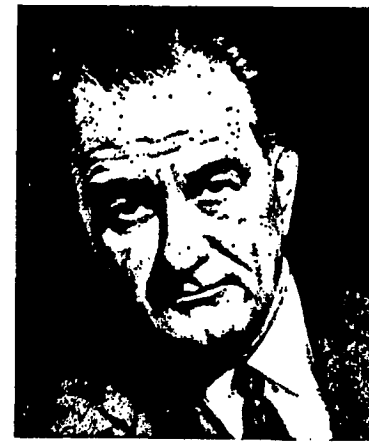
constantly attacked by the General seem much less militant, in fact, than their Catholic trade-union *confrères*, whose basic complaints have more in common with student *"contestation"* of industrial society than with Communist condemnation of its capitalist organisation. The issues are confused, of course, by borrowed Marxist terminology; but Pompidou's massive wage concessions last year, although partly absorbed by rising prices, seem to have taken the steam from many immediate grievances. In my own village street, innumerable modest citizens now have the workmen in, improving the property: everyone's eager to invest his paper gains in breeze blocks and mortar before inflation or devaluation does its worst.

FALSE PREDICTIONS are easy to make when writing at some distance from publication; and it may be that a love of anniversaries, the excitement of the elections, or an act of God or the Devil will somehow lead to further clashes. But the most striking feature of the period immediately after the fatal referendum was the calm with which de Gaulle's retirement was greeted. Catharsis had set in. It suggested that what had been happening in France was neither the establishment of the "police state" that some extremists claimed nor the build-up of a new revolutionary climate, but rather the slow erosion of Gaullism in its original form. Again, it's easy to exaggerate. Charles Darwin made it a habit to note down any fact or thought that contradicted his general conclusions, "for I had found by experience that such facts and thoughts were far more apt to escape from the memory than favourable ones." Yet, even before the referendum, events over recent years seemed to form a pattern: "*L'après-Gaullisme*" began several years ago.

The first sign, perhaps, was the Common Market crisis of 1965, when France virtually withdrew from Brussels for a full seven months. This caused great uneasiness in Paris; and in December of that year, for complicated reasons not all connected with the crisis, the General was forced into a run-off in the Presidential election. Then, in January 1966, he ousted Giscard d'Estaing from the Finance Ministry, beginning a running battle between the Gaullists and some of their "Independent Republican" allies that continues to this day. In March, French opinion was further disconcerted by the withdrawal from NATO; in June came the inconclusive visit to Russia; and in August the General's trip to Djibouti, where riots caused him to cancel a speech. Early in 1967, the Djibouti referendum produced a majority for independence from France. In



LBJ

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Eric Goldman is a historian who participated in the making of history. For three years he was Special Consultant to Lyndon Johnson and from his White House office, in the face of the challenges of an increasingly hard-pressed administration, he saw how the President and the men around him were affected by and responded to the events of their time. This volume represents his account, his analysis and his reflections. It is also rich in anecdotes, personal portraits and new insights into the actions and motivations of Johnson, his family and his adversaries. A book that future generations will count essential to their understanding of the 1960's.

THE TRAGEDY OF LYNDON JOHNSON

ERIC F. GOLDMAN 65s

MACDONALD

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March, in the French legislative election, the Gaullists lost 40 seats and only scraped in with a narrow majority. In April, the Government decided to rule by "*ordonnance*," and Edgard Pisani, who as former Minister of Agriculture had shown both initiative and loyalty, decided to resign from his new Ministerial post. In May, amid some surprise, the British Labour Government applied to join the Common Market, posing only minimum conditions, and the Six held a totally abortive "summit" meeting in Rome at which the General conspicuously stood apart. In June, despite his admonitions, Israel launched the six-day Suez war in response to the blockade of Aqaba. In July came the visit to Canada, the cry of *"Vive le Québec libre!"*, and the hasty withdrawal. September saw the General in Poland, where he mildly echoed his Canadian tactics, suggesting stealthy disengagement from the "blocks"—only to be met by a chilly Polish assertion of loyalty to the Soviet alliance. In November, many Frenchmen—including civil servants and army officers—were alienated by the General's verbal attack on Jewry; and his opponents were further heartened, during these same months, by the cineasts' comparative victory over those in the Government who had sought to eject Henri Langlois from the Paris *Cinémathèque*. Then, in May and June 1968, came the famous *"événements,"* followed in November by the currency crisis that may not be over yet. Finally, just before this year's referendum, came several poor showings—the Brittany visit, ending not with a bang but a Quimper, and three successive speeches on television which to many viewers recalled the ineffective rhetoric of the General's TV appearance on 24 May last year.

IN THE BACKGROUND of this chequered chronology lies a further development less easy to document. This is the growing restiveness of Gaullists themselves. A number of Deputies, and even some less important Ministers, had long hinted at their dissatisfaction with one or other of the General's acts or policies. Perhaps the massive majority they won in last summer's election was too big to cohere. The public, broadly speaking, was less affected—or disaffected—than some of the politicians; but even the public soon began to show new signs of unrest. Previously, when the General's popularity in the opinion polls dropped by a point or two, the defecting voters tended to drift towards the "Don't Knows." But after the elections of June 1968 many middle-of-the-road voters began looking towards Georges Pompidou, the Prime Minister who helped the General weather last May's disorders, and whom he then promptly dropped.

Cartoons, and even photographs, make Pompidou look like a bushy-eyebrowed Giant Panda, as soft in appearance as the sound of his name. Nothing could be more misleading. The former Premier, despite his relatively obscure and presumably cushioned past as a Rothschild banker, comes of tough peasant stock and is as hard as nails. He made an immense impression on the French public during the May disorders, and his very tiredness gave his features a lean relentlessness that came over sharply on TV. Here, too, was a man. He might not be congenial, especially to the Left; he might seem a ruthless fighter; his name and that of his wife might have been linked, by scurrilous Paris gossip, with the tortuous uncertainties of *l'affaire Markovitch*; he might, even, have misplayed some of his political cards. But by the spring of 1969 there was no doubt about it: Pompidou, whether or not the General intended to adopt him as a *dauphin,* was everyone's number-one bet as the next President of the Republic. This in itself changed the General's own situation. Pompidou enjoys the loyalty of many Gaullists, who have sharp noses for future success; and in the campaign for the 27 April referendum, he certainly seemed to be used as an electoral attraction, an Erhard-like *Wahl-lokomotiv*. But his very existence blunted, to say the least, a favourite weapon of the General's—"It's either me or chaos." Not any more it isn't. To many who had once agreed with this diagnosis the alternative was now Georges Pompidou.

Alone, the hard-core Gaullist vote is insufficient to give Pompidou an absolute majority in the first round of a three- or more-cornered fight. In the run-off, much depends on his opponent. The extreme Left is unlikely to vote for a Centre candidate; the Centre is unlikely to support a man from the far Left. A moderate just acceptable to the Centre and the non-Communist Left might conceivably defeat Pompidou; but the chances seem slim. With all due precaution, therefore, a Pompidou victory seems likely—resulting in a Gaullist President with a Gaullist-dominated National Assembly which may but need not be dissolved.

How far would this change things? Those Britannia figures in old *Punch* cartoons who were always asking "Watchman, what of the Night?" had their modern counterparts in British and American officials and/or journalists who used to feel that if only General de Gaulle were no longer in office, European problems would suddenly be solved: Britain would enter the Common Market; Atlantic Partnership would begin. A few people still cherish these illusions: like other outside observers of France they see the Gaullist régime as a kind of

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aberration, a political popcorn interval interrupting the scenario of their favourite film. This feeling is no doubt heightened by the outbursts of some fanatics, the toadying of others, and the continual insistence, by "Left-wing Gaullist" lawyers such as René Capitant, that Gaullism has broken decisively with the régimes of the past. A re-reading of history suggests otherwise. Some of the gloomy dispatches out of Paris complaining at the Fourth Republic's behaviour could almost have been re-run ten years later. Part of the General's secret was precisely that he expressed something deep in common French attitudes: how much and how permanently, are the real problems to be solved.

WHETHER OR NOT Pompidou wins the coming elections, France will continue to lack an "Anglo-Saxon" system of two main competitive parties. The fragmentation of the French Left, if nothing else, has destroyed any Gaullist and Communist visions of forming a two-party system between them; with Czechoslovakia, it's also destroyed any hope—or fear—of a "popular front." So power will continue to depend on coalition and competition, chiefly with the floating Centre vote that unseated de Gaulle. Centrist politicians of all colours still sometimes flirt with the idea of a grand coalition extending from Left-wing Giscardians through supporters of Duhamel, Poher, and Lecanuet, to Right-wing Socialists like Gaston Defferre; but at present it looks outdated or premature.

MUCH MORE PLAUSIBLE, for the immediate future, is a continuation of Gaullism, but in a situation more and more resembling the dreaded Fourth Republic. Without de Gaulle, Gaullism will not only lack its Messiah: it will also have less courage. The convictions, good, bad, or indifferent, will undoubtedly remain. The word *"national"* will still have its attractive resonance; the word *"France"* will still glow with pride; the word *"Europe"* will still sound slightly unconvincing; and the word *"supranational,"* like *"l'Angleterre"* or *"l'Amérique,"* will still curl the lip. The necessities will begin to be felt more—the need for allies, both on the part of France and on that of the ruling party. Without the General, the Gaullist party will certainly lose some of its voters; without his force of character, it may shed some of its faults. There are rough rides ahead for France, and for Europe; and if France relapses into agility and cleverness, it may well be time for her partners to use constructively some of the character and determination that her former President so abundantly and perversely displayed.

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A Letter to a Certain Paris Literary Critic

By Jean-François Revel

NO SYSTEM of literary criticism has ever been retained by posterity. We can go further than that. Every system of literary criticism inevitably becomes the scapegoat of the next generation without the faintest hope of ultimate rehabilitation. The leading critics of today make fun of the critics of yesterday, comfortably installed in the tumbril which is taking them like their predecessors to the guillotine. Great works in the manner of those queens who regularly had the lovers of the previous evening executed at dawn are prompt to have their periodical ration of corpses laid out stone dead on the ground.

It is probable that a system of literary criticism is much more a method of protection than of penetration. Once a system has fulfilled its function for a couple of generations, the machinery grows rusty. It is characteristic of a system of literary criticism that it makes all the works on which it has been used look exactly alike. Since art is the realm of differences, it becomes a matter of reducing disturbing diversities to a condition of uniformity in which not a single particle derives, or should derive, from the same language.

That is why people are constantly demanding with unwearying naïveté the creation of a critical language. "What's needed," we find the critics writing, "is a language." Not a bit of it. It is the one thing that is not lacking.

A system of literary criticism which makes all works look alike is the expression of the personal narcissism of the writer who appeals to the narcissism of the reader. Literary needs are not widespread: what is very widespread is the need to experience literary needs. We must therefore provide a substitute for literary needs for the benefit of those who do not feel them.

Created by and for people who are not properly adapted (to themselves, to others, to the community), literature is used as an instrument of adaptation.

A MAN WHO ADAPTS HIMSELF to literature has no need of literature. On the contrary, what he needs is criticism. If the liberation of oneself from literature—that malady of language—consists of reducing the literary act to another literary act, this is the mission of criticism. The less you love, the more militant your behaviour. Made up of indefatigable intermediaries (but what turncoat ever grows tired?) and nice little soldiers who are promptly mown down by machine-gun fire (but a single night in Paris will put all that right), criticism undertakes simultaneously to maintain a surface "agitation" —a sort of literary *Sport-Dimanche*—and to translate into the terms of surface agitation the works of the past, promoted to the honour of being used as reserves of sauce for the specialists of the day. (*Visitez Littérature, ses ramparts, ses spécialités. Messe à 9 h, 10 h 30, 18 h.*)

This is not an attack on fashion. Nobody follows fashion. If we followed fashion we should all be reading Gilbert Cesbron. Nobody goes to mass: if we went to mass we should all be reading Mauriac. But nobody reads Mauriac (not even Gilbert Cesbron). We *see* them which is not the same as reading them.

For most books are no more than a title in a list of the successes of the Ego; most articles are no more than a certain number of square inches in the expanse of a newspaper. It is sufficient to see: "Oh! The property of M. Cesbron." "Oh! The party for *Marat/Sade*!"

JEAN-FRANÇOIS REVEL *is a leading member of the younger French generation of philosophers and literary critics. He writes regularly for* L'Express *in Paris and has published a history of Western philosophy. A short book on Italy* (As For Italy) *was published in England by Weidenfeld in 1959. He has been especially instrumental as an editor in making the art-historical works of Anglo-American scholarship available in French translation.*

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Second axiom (there is no first axiom): On the double game of criticism.

"It's good. You can see that from the way it's selling."

"It's good. You can see that from the fact that it's not selling."

Fourth critical axiom (there is no third axiom):

"It's good. That's proved by the author's triumphant lecture tour in the United States."

"It's good. That's proved by the fact that the author's never invited anywhere."

The simple-minded always imagine that they have at last found a good way of not missing out on any literary work of value.

SYSTEMS OF LITERARY CRITICISM are constructed in order to make up for that devastating lack of curiosity about literary works which is known as the thirst for culture.

"He wanted to express the spirit of the age." "He wanted to see his temperament through nature." "He wanted to defend the strong when they were under attack from the weak." "The weak bribed by the strong." "He embarked upon a complete refitting of sensibility." "He wanted to describe the incapacity to write." "He exteriorised his own inner world." "He voiced the needs of the masses." "He was a lonely rebel." "He threw doubts on the nature of language." "He gave significance to. . . ." "He is significant." "He wanted to make writing the object of writing." "His art is a quest." "Anguish," "guilt," "void," "joy," "life," "progress," "work," "craftsmanship," "magic," "reason," "unreason," "structure," "awareness of," "unconscious," "refusal," "prayer," "poetry," "form," "content," "deformation," "flight into the forefront." "In the first place he is unacceptable." "We must pass by way of him." "He's dated." "It is very studied." "Very sustained." "Unintentionally studied." "Deliberately unstudied." "Structurally deliberate." "Deliberately structured." "Existentially thematic." "Systematic." . . . Thank you. Not bad. And you?

THE SIGHT OF earlier critical systems going down the drain does not worry the authors of later systems any more than the disappearance of a political régime worries the author of a *coup d'état* who founds a new régime. In politics it is never a question of knowing whether the changes in the price of corn were better or less well explained under the previous régime, but simply of being the person whose job it now is to provide an explanation.

Antisthenes advised his followers not to learn

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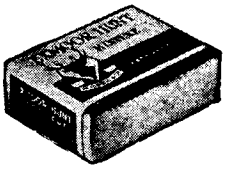

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to read. He was right. Reading is something that cannot be learnt.

Every generation of critics shoots down the previous generation, on the pretext of eliminating *une fois pour toutes*, "once for all" (delightful expression) "gossip about literary works." By this means it starts to gossip ten times more.

Plato is the most eminent example of a phenomenon which we often observe in philosophy, that is to say, an actual regression assumes the appearance of the most "modern" of theories when seen in relation to earlier theories. In this respect philosophy occupies an intermediary position between science where progress is in fact measured, and art where the very idea of progress is meaningless. In philosophy, indeed, there exists a form of progress in the sense that there are arguments and one can take account of arguments which have already been formulated. But we can also disregard them and make for a level which is lower than or external to the one which seemed to have been reached. This is possible because philosophical knowledge is not by its nature cumulative in the way that scientific knowledge is and, to this extent, is related by one of its facets to art which liberates it from the strict law of progress. Obligatory in science, illusory in art, progress is provisional in philosophy. Literary criticism is at one and the same time counterfeit philosophy, counterfeit art, and counterfeit science. It counterfeits scientific progress, artistic freedom, and the philosophical fresh start.

I remember a French consul-general once saying to me *à propos* of Michelangelo: *"Il a une classe folle, ce garçon!* (He's madly classy, that lad)." That's art criticism for you! But not everybody is a consul-general and we've all got to live. When he said, "He's madly classy, that lad," the consul-general was convinced that he was making a personal judgment and that nobody had ever used the expression before him. (So far as Michelangelo was concerned, it was quite true.) He had therefore founded a new system of criticism and one which as a matter of fact was not entirely false. Nor without its uses. A lady who was present at the dinner at which the phrase was used felt an urge that took her to the tombs of the Medici which she would never have seen without it. What more can you ask? What would be the use of art if we had to talk about it!

Freud said in a letter to Pfister: "We can do nothing genuine unless we have a touch of the criminal in us." The founders of critical systems are therefore the only human beings who are completely innocent. To feel the need of superimposing a discourse on a work of art, whether or not the work itself is a discourse, is something that can only come to a person who is entirely free from any sort of perversion. The one way of speaking without innocence of a writer is to speak not about his work, but about the things of which he himself has spoken in his work. A writer only comments in a way that is bearable on the writers whose place he takes, or at any rate would like to take. He is bound to be either jealous of them because they have said what he wanted to say, or joyful because they have said it badly or not well enough.

It is often asserted that the only real critics are the creators. That is untrue because their real criticism is precisely their creative work. It is also frequently said that critics are writers like any other writers, that criticism is creation. That is untrue, too, because when it happens nobody notices. Criticism can only pass for creation when it is no longer criticism.

A friend once told me that he had never been able to do a *"dissertation française"* at school. In fact, when you asked him: "Was *X* right in writing that writing is writing?" he replied with a "Yes" or a "No." He had never been able to say anything more about it. He was one of the greatest connoisseurs of literature I have ever known.

Now someone is going to say to me: "You are simply making an apologia for a *certain* kind of criticism: impressionist and subjective criticism: I like this—I don't like that." If you say this, it means that you are already a die-hard fundamentalist. You are shut off from literature for ever. For literature only belongs to the nomads. Left to themselves the nomads recognise one another at once. But a critic never knows when he is dealing with a nomad.

We all know those special whistles which are inaudible to the human ear, but make every sleeping dog leap to its feet. The nomads are those dogs.

Why hurt the feelings of somebody who happens to like this book? Why indeed? Nothing forced you to read it. Nothing forced you to make people read it who were under no obligation to do so. You were all happy, and so were we. It wasn't raining and yet you were absolutely determined to imitate the sound of rain by rattling split peas in a helmet.

"Your thesis," you will say to me, "constitutes a return to the theory of Valéry, Proust, and the formalists on the work which must be seized in itself outside the historical or aesthetic commentaries which obscure it, etc. This means that you attribute in advance an objective essence to the work to which you have direct access, the same access whatever the period to which it belongs.

I reply, as I did when speaking of "subjective

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criticism," that by talking in this way you have already moved into the field of critical systems. You don't interest me any more: what you are going to say has become completely predictable for me.

CRITICAL SYSTEMS are designed to enable the blind to become judges of colour. Someone who has never so much as glanced at the least poem, the least novel, wakes up when you translate it for him into terms of "pure poetry," "essential psycho-analysis," "Marxist dialectics" or "structural analysis," making good in this fashion his lack of sensibility. The need for anything except the work is a form of fetishism.

You talk, and you know in advance, as I do, exactly what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. Whether you are praising or blaming them, you use precisely the same language about one book as another or about all books. Nor is there any difference between what you say and what anybody else says. The advantage is that we need not bother to listen in order to find out what you think. Maurice already said the same thing to me yesterday and Guy will repeat it to me tomorrow, both convinced into the bargain that they are the only ones who have thought of it. I came to talk about poetry and you are making me take part in a seminar on sociology! The difference does not lie between the three of you, but between the successive liveries which Letters, and you who serve them, are compelled to wear. If you are afraid of being alone, give up literature and take up mathematics.

You have an agronomic conception of literature: you imagine that every year ought to produce its harvest. Now the beautiful is never anything but an eventuality. Never a fact. You talk as though it were a fact. For you the menu of the day is always good because one has to be well fed. You are the head-waiters of literature.

AESTHETICS CANNOT EXIST because an artist never solves any problems except those which are entirely of his own creation. Nevertheless, people continue the tireless search for a "rigorous" system of aesthetics which would provide the means of recognising that a work is beautiful. This hope which is perpetually being reborn is demonstrated by two kinds of aesthetic: one sets out to establish historical links between works of literature themselves and the other their connection with other aspects of civilisation.

The first kind of aesthetic is inspired by the activity of the critic who seldom manages to find the words he needs to help us to see what is beautiful in a work. The second is inspired

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by the customary historical explanation which we already have great difficulty in disentangling with any certainty from political, economic, and social factors. In the first case, people imagine that what certain critics have managed to do for individuals works they can do for "the work of art in general," an elusive shadow which only needs to be mentioned by the person who invokes it to betray an absence of all poetic sensibility because the poetical is always a quality belonging to a given work. In the second case the method of explanation, which is suitable for ineluctable facts, is applied to facts which are contingent and gratuitous.

Indeed, contrary to other historical phenomena, *the literary work is never obligatory*. It will be replied that there is no society without literature. But this reply evades the problem because by that is meant that there is no society exempt from objects which have a claim to be regarded as literature, that is to say, that people see aesthetic phenomena in relation to other phenomena by refusing to make a critical judgment. Otherwise, if we preserve our critical sense, we have before us continually the spectacle of men who imagine that they are producing literature when they are doing nothing of the sort. In short, only a part of literature is genuinely literature.

Moreover, each invariably raises doubts about our knowing the part that is literature because to recognise it as such depends on our adherence. Every society certainly produces some form of art, but I can always deny that its art really is art whereas I cannot deny that its agriculture is agriculture however primitive it happens to be.

The two methods of attempting to work out a "rigorous" system of aesthetics are both based on a false analogy with the logical or mathematical demonstration of truth; the second on a false analogy with the use in history of the principle of causality.

You only believe in proof and your proofs are the same for all books. But proofs change while the book remains. Through trying to prove too much you only prove one thing: that you merely know your own proofs and do not know a single book. It should be recognised that it is a profession like another: one can very well talk to a woman about love simply in the hope of selling her a bottle of the latest brand of aphrodisiac, even if it is harmless, of which one happens to be the inventor or the distributor.

In the absence of the text the only possible form of criticism is evocation. If the text of Sade's *120 Journées* had been lost, I should have liked someone to tell me the story of it.

In so far as it relates particularly to Sade, I wish to recommend to the reader especially the preface that Georges Bataille wrote for *Justine*. Bataille remarks quite rightly that "in trying to praise Sade we tend to take the bite out of his thought."[1] I feel inclined to ask those who applaud Sade as one of the great pioneers in the liberation of man if they are prepared to subscribe to the demand that he makes in *Français, encore un effort* ... for the legalisation of sexual murder. For it is absolutely clear that Sade is in no sense joking when he celebrates "the murders of voluptuousness" and writes of murder and torture as means of achieving orgasm. What is more, he provides an explanation which he believes to be scientific of ejaculation sparked off by crime. "He [the Duc de Blangis] felt that a violent commotion caused in any adversary produced in our nerve centres an answering vibration whose effect by irritating the animal spirits which rise in the hollow of the nerves brings pressure to bear upon the erective nerves and leads after this shock to what is called a lubricious sensation." That's what you think!

To devote oneself to drawing up an inventory of all the passions naturally enriches one's knowledge and awareness of human sensibility. To proclaim the right to live of all the "erotic minorities" is in itself a proof of liberal goodwill. But Sade will not tolerate being tamed either in the sense of being ennobled by knowledge or in the sense of a tolerant liberalism which is self-destructive and reveals its own absurdity from the moment when one asserts that all passions lead sooner or later to sexual crime. The liberal thesis argues in fact rightly that the idea of "perversion" is purely a matter of theology and the police as soon as the partners are in agreement. But when you find it necessary to kill in order to enjoy, how can you claim to have secured the agreement of the partner? It is probable that if an intending suicide offered himself voluntarily it would take all the spice out of the act and spoil the effect contemplated.

Two things appeal to Sade's sexual imagination: sodomy (whether with men or women matters little) and murder. Sodomy has never been in any serious danger in any civilisation. It often meets with more tolerance than vaginal love outside marriage, and the crocodile tears with which Sade demanded its legalisation appear greatly exaggerated. In fact, his real aim was not merely to get it legalised but made compulsory.

[1] See the separate edition in the Collection *Libertés* (Jean-Jacques Pauvert) preceded by an introduction by Maurice Blanchot, and Vol. XXV of the *Oeuvres complètes*.

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For before or without or by murder, the element which is common to the achievement of Sade's sexual aims is always the imposition of some form of constraint on other people. If the partner consents, if he experiences the least pleasure, if he lends himself to the arrangement out of love, friendship or interest (you could certainly begin by appealing to his interest in order to deceive him later because the pleasure would be all the greater), in short if there is the slightest communication with the other person the thing no longer works.

Sadery, which includes but goes beyond sadism, is therefore completely opposed to the modern evolution of sexual inclination which is based entirely on the ideas of exchange, complicity, shared orgasm, with pleasure subordinated because it is given in order that it may be reciprocated.

Our age has achieved the development of free sexuality—free, it should be observed, in relation to the age immediately preceding it and not in relation to earlier ages—owing to the slant given by the theory that sexuality is a form of communication.

Now this theory is completely opposed to the basic principle of what I have called *la sadité*, which maintains that you only advance in the way of sexuality by driving other people further and further away from yourself, in never having with the other person a relation of consciousness to consciousness except in the case of trickery. The sadistic pleasure lover thirsts for a solipsism which is always becoming more complete. It follows that Sade turns his back on modern sexuality absolutely and it is gratifying but stupid to try to turn him into a precursor of it. He is great for exactly the opposite reason.

Sade holds in his open hands the mysterious core of the heart of humanity, that is to say: Why does a man take pleasure in killing? Or more accurately: Why do men divide into two broad classes—those who enjoy killing and those who are horrified by it? Because, to my way of thinking, that is the great dividing line.

We should observe that all those who are murderers at heart are not necessarily sexual sadists, and that not all sexual sadists enjoy killing.

Whatever the answer, the need to obtain the approval of the man or woman who is responsible for our pleasure is a modern and democratic need and not the reverse. The genius of Sade consists in having placed at the disposal of a sexuality, which was in fact archaic, literary talent, a dialectical skill and the philosophical resources secreted by a great period of civilisa-

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tion. Sade has nothing in common with the libertinage of the 18th century which was based on complicity any more than the Battle of Stalingrad had anything in common with the Battle of *Hernani*. The only aspect of civilisation which touches us in Sade—apart from his marvellous style (who was the idiot who had the audacity to say that he wrote badly?)—is his humour. Or let us say rather the comic element in his work: the physical descriptions of our four criminals, the repetition of "the usual roars and bellows of the duke's discharges" who had "previously rushed to shut himself up with seventy or eighty bottles of champagne" or burgundy, all knocked off with impunity in the time of a coitus, etc., which provide us with one of the biggest laughs since Rabelais. But with Rabelais laughter is deliberately sought whereas with Sade it is only perceptible in the chinks. I am speaking of his "white" humour. For however surprising it may appear, there is no *humeur noire* in Sade.

In Sade black is black, and humour is humour. But as Plato says in his *Philebus*, "a little very pure white is worth much more than a lot of white mixed with black."

SYSTEMATIC LITERARY CRITICISM of which I described some of the characteristics in the aphoristic part of this essay would really add up to the poor man's crime. Sadery is *un succès du Moi*, a success of the ego because it consists in finding oneself alone by alienating unto death the instruments of power. In the same way the systematic literary critic knows the successes of the Ego by enjoying the work he is discussing without the least participation of the work itself. However, as I have said, in the last analysis it is the critic who dies (a natural death) and not the work, at any rate not for everybody.

L.B.J. & the American Intellectuals

By D. W. Brogan

THERE IS a famous Dublin story of the one literary effort of Charles Stewart Parnell's brother who had been given a sinecure job of Chamberlain by the Corporation of Dublin. His sister-in-law, the former Kitty O'Shea, had published her not very valuable memoirs of her relationship with the Chief, and Parnell's brother published a kind of refutation under the title *A Patriot's Mistake*. This was at once christened by the Dublin wits, *A Patriot's Brother's Mistake*. I am afraid that Professor Goldman's book, *The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson*, has recalled this story to my mind.[1] For, begging the question of in what sense the career of Lyndon Johnson was a tragedy, this book is not about the tragedy of Lyndon B. Johnson, but the misadventures of Professor Eric Goldman. True, there is a good deal of narrative about President Johnson's career as President, and a good deal of criticism as well as some praise. But there is nothing in this part of Professor Goldman's book which is really new or original. The narrative of the Johnson Presidency is far inferior to what I still think much the best book on the theme, Messrs. Evans and Novak's *Lyndon B. Johnson: the Exercise of Power*.[2] Messrs. Evans and Novak were not very friendly to the President, but they made a very serious effort to assess both his strong and his weak points, and provided a very plausible theory of his ultimate defeat. Professor Goldman repeats the same story with a good deal less effective criticism and less lively narrative.

What this book is really about is Professor Goldman's role as "the Intellectual in Residence." This, apparently, was the title given to Professor Goldman when, at the suggestion of some loyal Princeton pupils, he was summoned to the White House to give it that cultural little extra which was conspicuously missing, or at any rate was thought to be missing, by the devoted friends of John F. Kennedy and the devoted admirers of the epoch of Camelot.

If Professor Goldman had given up the attempt to tell the story of Lyndon Johnson's Presidency in a general sense, and had confined himself to what he saw and suffered in the White House, his book would have been a good deal shorter and a good deal better. He could have begun, for example, by telling us what he thought was the meaning of the office of "Intellectual in Residence." Was he to be a kind of prose poet laureate? Was his office to be an imitation of that of the Caesarian poet, the office which was one of the sinecure offices of the Hapsburg monarchy, an office to which that very great minor verse writer, Lorenzo da Ponte, aspired? What is an intellectual? and what should he do in residence? and why should he be in residence? These are questions

[1] *The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson*. By ERIC F. GOLDMAN. Knopf, New York, $8.95; Macdonald, London, 65s.

[2] *Lyndon B. Johnson: the Exercise of Power*. By ROWLAND EVANS and ROBERT NOVAK. New American Library, $1.25, 12s. 6d.

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that I think ought to have been set out at the beginning of this interesting, often helpful, but basically irritating book.

First of all, what is an intellectual? Professor Goldman, as an historian, knows the origin of the term, but he seems to assume that his readers will know it automatically. They don't. "Intellectual" was a term invented at the time of the Dreyfus case to discriminate offensively between the believers in the innocence of Dreyfus and the believers in his guilt. The "intellectuals" belonged to the former class, and they were proud of the title because it allowed them to call on academic opinion in relevant fields to show up the nonsensical character of most of the "proofs" of Dreyfus' guilt, and also to draw on the prestige of the rising academic and scientific community of France round 1900. It was, in one way, a quarrel between the academic men of letters represented in the *Académie Française* and the academics in the strictest sense in the other academies of the *Institut*, above all in the *Académie des Sciences*. (Of course, the *École des Chartes* was called in, as its expertise was peculiarly relevant to a controversy in which the authenticity of documents was one of the fundamental problems.) The enemies of Dreyfus, many of whom dismissed the question of his guilt or innocence as irrelevant to the great political problems that the controversy raised, began to use "intellectual" in an offensive sense. These jealous, envious academics, cut off in the "university" from realities, used an irrelevant authority in what was basically the political problem of the salvation of France. "*Politique d'abord!*", to use Maurras' famous phrase, was the argument of the more intelligent enemies of the "revisionists" who fought against the annulling of the conviction of Dreyfus, rather than of the people who have gone on right down to the present day trying to find fantastic explanations of what is, after all, a comparatively simple question from the point of view of the professional historian. It must be said, however, that professional historians were not unanimously Dreyfusard. For example, on this question Rambaud broke away from Lavisse, ending the life of those Siamese twins. Some of the academic defenders of Dreyfus were remarkably slapdash in their use of evidence; still more so were some of the amateur political historians like Joseph Reinach. But I think it is fairly safe to say that the weight of academic opinion was on the side of the innocence of Dreyfus, as indeed it should have been.

But the term "intellectual" survived the immediate controversy although the *Action Française* made desperate efforts to its dying day to reaffirm the guilt of Captain Dreyfus. For out of the quarrel over Dreyfus and Esterhazy

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came a legend which has been very important in modern history. This was the legend of the objectivity, freedom from party passion, and total devotion to truth which, it was held, united the academic world, at any rate in its strictest professional character. People did believe that eminent scientists had, by some kind of osmosis, a training which would serve them in dealing with questions like forgery, codes, legal procedure, the organisation of espionage and counter-espionage and the like, which would keep them "above the battle" and give to their decision a confirmation "strong as proofs of Holy Writ." On this easily acquired virtue the Left continued to draw down to the final disillusionment with the *bourrage de crâne* of the Soviet Union which so many academics had joined in. It was highly educational to discover that Romain Rolland, who boasted of the critical powers that saved him from falling for patriotic *blagues* during the First World War, was bitterly resentful when anyone pointed out to him some of the sad and indisputable truths about the Soviet Union. The scandalous behaviour of a great part of the French academic community over the Lysenko affair (as illustrated in the treatment of it by *Pensée*) shook the faith of many in the necessary educational effect of a scientific education, although, to do some scientists justice, they were more cautious in approving of Lysenko than were their philosophical colleagues and, as may be pointed out, there was a particular reason why the French academic community could swallow Lysenko, which was not present in England: there were hardly any geneticists in France, so any kind of nonsense was good enough for the products of *Normale*, most of whom exceeded any product of Balliol in their conviction of "their effortless superiority."

But from this original partisan use of the word intellectual has come a great deal of very silly thinking and has come in great part Professor Goldman's disillusionment. The term has been extended to cover nearly everybody who had received what we call a higher education and has any interests in the latest news in the arts and sciences. (I deliberately say the latest news because that is as far as many of the intellectuals get in modern times to the established discoveries of science and the less established discoveries of taste in the arts or visions in philosophy.)

What Professor Goldman meant and means by intellectuals seems to be almost everybody from readers of *Time* upwards to the inhabitants of what he calls "Metroamerica." This is very roughly equivalent to the old Russian idea of the intelligentsia, an idea rational enough to be valid in a country where all higher education—even all education—was both scarce and highly controlled by the government. Whether it is wise to classify people who have been to college or even to graduate school and who are engaged in quasi-intellectual pursuits like advertising or journalism is open to a good deal of doubt, but the point which concerns us is that Professor Goldman never seems to have got clear in his own mind what his duties were as an enlightened intellectual. (I would not for a moment deny that *he* is of the community he was supposed to represent, to cultivate and win over to tolerance and even sympathy with the Johnson Administration.)

That President Johnson should have been sold the idea of an "intellectual in residence" is a little surprising if we think of LBJ purely as a politician. Because unlike Professor Goldman, I, and I think in his calmer moments President Johnson, would have decided that either there was no such community to be cultivated, or it was not worth cultivating, or it could not be cultivated. But I can see the reasons which led LBJ to make this unfortunate experiment—much more unfortunate for Professor Goldman than for him. *Stat magni nominis umbra.* From the very beginning of his Presidency to its very last day, President Johnson stood under the shadow of the great name of John F. Kennedy. Was it a really great name? This could very well be doubted. We shall, in fact, never know if John F. Kennedy would have been a great President if he had got the second term which I, unlike a great many politicians, think he was certain to have got. He died "an inheritor of unfulfilled renown," which is perhaps the best thing to be if you cannot have your fame established with many concrete achievements.[8]

[8] President Kennedy in his ironical and sardonic way was quite conscious of the advantages of martyrdom. Thus, he said to his brother Robert after the ending of the Cuba crisis, that this was the time that he ought to go to the theatre. And, of course, a great deal of Lincoln's immense prestige is due to the tragedy and finality of his assassination. It allows people to believe, possibly rightly, that if he had lived, the disastrous history of Reconstruction would not have taken the form it did. I ought perhaps to say that I think most of the disasters were due to President Andrew Johnson, and not to the often maligned Republican leaders in Congress after Lincoln's death. But what JFK did not do deliberately at the very moment of his greatest triumph, was done for him by Lee Harvey Oswald at Dallas; and it was in the wake of this assassination that Lyndon Johnson came so deviously to the White House he had sought so eagerly and unsuccessfully for so long.

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THE FIRST THING TO SAY to explain some of President Johnson's least fortunate reactions and least fortunate actions, of which appointing Professor Goodman was one in a minor degree, is that he has been the victim of two kinds of denigration. He has been denigrated for not being Jack Kennedy; for not being a plausible inhabitant of Camelot; for failing to live up to the possibly largely artificial picture of the Kennedy Administration as a new reign of an enlightened monarch who was not a tyrant. To this aspect of the Kennedy myth and of the Johnson resentment of it, I shall return.

But before I go on to this, it is necessary, for the British reader, to emphasise something not sufficiently emphasised either in Professor Goldman's book or in this apologia for Johnson's Administration, *To Heal and to Build*.[4] That very acute political correspondent, Mr. Howard K. Smith, does deal with the hostile literature which President Johnson provoked or, whether he provoked it or not, from which he suffered.

> The literature from which to dissent has grown voluminous in a short time, ranging from the wholly unfunny farce, *MacBird*, across a sizeable list of magazine pieces to Robert Sherrill's sour biography, *The Accidental President*. What is particularly significant to me is that the writers are capable observers, with no previous record of malice, and will often in private admit that their arguments are not quite legitimate. In view of the savage treatment by contemporary writers of public figures like Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, one is forced to conclude that the abuse of forceful Presidents satisfies some strong public appetite. That calls for a special effort of analysis.

With all of this I agree; but perhaps because Mr. Smith spends most of his time in Washington he does not deal adequately with another aspect of the attacks on President Johnson.

Our Prime Minister has very recently complained of the continuous barrage of slander from which he suffers. Without going into the rights or wrongs of Mr. Wilson's complaints, it is quite obvious that, compared with what President Johnson had to suffer, Mr. Wilson was almost always surrounded by sycophantic flatterers. I do not know of any President of the United States who has been the victim of so much malignant, absurd, and poisonous slander as has LBJ. This is perhaps not so evi-

[4] *To Heal and to Build: The Programmes of President Lyndon B. Johnson*. Edited by JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, Toronto, London, Sydney. $8.95; 83s. 6d.

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dent from Washington as it is from other parts of the United States—from Dallas, from Chicago, from Denver, from southern California. I have made a collection of pamphlet material directed against LBJ, and it is violently mendacious and in most cases malignant to a degree which is outrageous and reveals how sick a great deal of conservative America is. Most of it could not be published in this country because of the application of our laws of slander and of libel. Some of it is character assassination of a type which should make everyone associated with it deeply ashamed of themselves. I have no reason to believe that any of the people who write, who print, who read this stuff are ashamed of themselves. The modern American seems to me to be even more welcoming to outrageous slander than is the traditional Frenchman. And before we are too censorious of the students or of the Blacks for their cutting themselves off from the main American tradition, we might spare some thought for the self-styled conservatives, for if they represent the American tradition, it is a thing that almost any intelligent, humane, and honest man and woman would wish to separate himself from. Every country gets the conservatives it deserves, and it would be hard to be more unkind to Americans than to apply this dictum to the United States.

But as one who has moved around the United States in every section repeatedly during the Johnson Administration (and before that during the Kennedy Administration) and who has listened to scandal since the early days of Calvin Coolidge, I have never known anything so base, obscene and malignant as the verbal attacks on President Johnson, mainly but not exclusively coming from the Right. Some of these involved palpably false stories which would have shocked Procopius. Some of these are deliberately cast in a form which would cause Mrs. Johnson great pain. Some of them, given the permissive atmosphere of the United States and the increasing disbelief in anything that is uttered by authority in the United States, find a ready welcome from people who really know better, but allow their hatred of Johnson and their hostility to "liberalism" in America to kill any decency and any critical sense. I have compared in my own mind some of the stories I have heard in Paris about General de Gaulle with Johnson stories I have heard all over the United States. It is not a claim that, if I were an American, I would want to make, but I would say that American political and odious verbal fiction beats anything I have known in France in many years of studying that country, and beats anything I have known hitherto in America in many years of studying that country. And it is worth noting that most, though not all, of the most odious slander is Texan slander of one of the two Presidents Texas has produced.[5]

If we assume that Professor Goldman's task when he was called to be "the intellectual in residence" was to conciliate the more literate members of American society, he faced one terrific handicap. It was not only that this group was still in its great majority fascinated by the memory of Kennedy, lamenting the young Titus (to use Cyril Connolly's admirable parallel), but that the vaguely cultured classes had to be reconciled to the fact that the President was not only a Texan but, apart from some occasional attempts to appear as a Western statesman, was almost outrageously Texan. This was a handicap. I cannot discuss in any detail why Texas has, from its beginning, been regarded either with black humour or simply hostility. But the hostility, or the hostile wonder, is very old. We have recently learned from the publication of the correspondence of General Grant that when he was a young officer in Mexico City and the Mexican War was obviously coming to an end and peace was being negotiated, he wrote to his wife saying that "the army" (by which he meant the West Point officers like himself) were insistent on one thing: the terms of the peace treaty must *force Mexico to take back Texas*. This has been a very common attitude down to the present day. Texans were noisy; extravagantly dressed; extraordinarily vain; highly disorderly in many ways; highly untrustworthy; and they all had delusions of grandeur about their state and about themselves. This is part of the common wisdom of the American people.[6]

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[5] President Eisenhower was actually born in Texas, but he has only very occasionally boasted of it.

[6] I can remember a few years ago going first class to America (needless to say, at someone else's expense) and seeing in the waiting room at Victoria Air Terminal two very remarkable figures, obviously father and son. Each was wearing a twenty-gallon hat. Each was wearing boots of a degree of fancifulness that I had never seen anywhere before. Each was wearing the costume of a great *ranchero* family like the Kleberg family of the King Ranch. Each was chewing a cigar and spitting on the carpet. This performance was repeated in the first-class section of the 'plane. At first I came to the conclusion that these were Texans; then I decided they were, in fact, actors hired from an agency by the tourist and political interests of California to

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So when President Johnson became, accidentally, President of the United States, and not, as some people have more recently called him, President of Texas, he started not only under the terrible difficulties of the bloody manner of his accession to the White House, but from the fact that he was a Texan and a conspicuously Texas Texan. He started, as the Americans put it, with "two strikes on him." And, as almost too many commentators have pointed out, he did not at first understand that what was tolerable socially in a Senator from Texas was not tolerable in a President from Texas.

Then he suffered from what he thought, and I think rightly thought, was enormous, calculated, organised injustice towards him. The Kennedy family were soon described, with some reason, as "a government in exile." Many, many Americans who were powerful in the mass media were looking for a Young Pretender before finally settling for Robert Kennedy. The real contrast between the White House under the Kennedys and the White House under the Johnsons was both exaggerated and very largely irrelevant. Under the Kennedys, for the first time since John Quincy Adams (and much more successfully than it had been during the Administration of John Quincy Adams), the White House was spontaneously hospitable to men of letters, men of science, and men of the performing arts.[7] Professor Goldman either was commissioned or thought he was commissioned to win over the intellectuals, by which he really seems to have meant the more literate sections of the American people, or to give a Texas version of the Kennedy Camelot at the White House. Such an enterprise was probably bound to fail anyway. When Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy received highbrow musicians or Nobel Prizemen, they were doing what to them came naturally. This could not be true of the Johnsons. More than that, the favourable publicity which

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make Texas even more unpopular than it already was. Finally, I decided there was something phoney about the whole act and by surreptitiously examining the passenger list, I discovered that the two dramatic figures came from Denver, Colorado; and although Denver goes in a big way for Western clothes, it usually does not go in for them in such an extravagant form. Texas does, or is thought to do so.

[7] I am reporting a general view although a good case could be made for asserting that the immediate predecessor of John Kennedy as a patron, friend, and cultivator of the arts and sciences was Theodore Roosevelt who had at least as many claims to being an intellectual as Kennedy had.

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the press gave the Kennedys was not given in anything like the same degree to the Johnsons.[8]

In other ways, the Johnsons had reason to resent the continuing prestige of the Kennedys. It was not only that the "working press" admired and liked President Kennedy and often covered up for him, but that even in Texas the ghost of Jack Kennedy walked. Thus, I remember being in Austin a few months after Lyndon Johnson entered the White House and noting that, on the "main stem" of Austin, practically every shop had portraits of Jack and Jackie and hardly any had portraits of Lyndon and Lady Bird. This was more than human flesh and blood could be expected to endure, although I have reason to believe that Mrs. Johnson bore it much better than her husband did. But however that may be, even if there had been no important policy differences or grounds for criticism, the attempt to create a mutual sympathy between the opinion makers and the Johnson White House was probably doomed to failure.

AT ANY RATE, it failed. One of the comic episodes of Professor Goldman's career in the White House was the famous party of which it is difficult to decide whether the absence of Robert Lowell or the presence of Dwight Macdonald was the more disastrous for Professor Goldman's programme. There were special reasons for the dramatic collapse of this particular enterprise, but again there was an element of injustice in the whole affair. For example, it is said that Mrs. Kennedy had commented on her husband's musical tastes. "The only music Jack likes is *'Hail to the Chief!'* " This I know only by repute; but I have slightly better authority for asserting my belief that President Kennedy did not like all the alterations his wife had made in the White House, although most of them were brilliant improvements. But Professor Goldman seems to have had rather simple ideas of "how to make friends and influence people" in the direction of a more amiable disposition towards the new régime. He does not seem to me to have been very discriminating in the kind of intellectuals, however widely the term was interpreted, whom he chose to try to convert or to seduce or, to use his example, convince of the friendly interest taken by the new President in the general cultural activities of the nation. Thus, he organised or tried to organise what can be called a confrontation between the President and representatives of the critical and rising American youth. Without going into any details, I may say that it seems to me odd that he should write seriously:

> The evening's entertainment would express the taste of the upcoming educated generation—performers such as Bill Cosby and Barbra Streisand.

This tells us more about Professor Goldman than it does about President Johnson. Of course, Professor Goldman's idea had its possibilities. He wanted to launch a scheme of White House Fellows. It was a good idea and might with more luck have been mutually profitable. But whether because Johnson lacked the *doigté* of President Kennedy or because Professor Goldman had not the persuasive power of some of the Kennedy staff, there were no serious poli-

[8] I once introduced, in the Reform Club, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., to a very eminent member of the Downing Street team. I said to this intellectual (a genuine intellectual) that Arthur Schlesinger had just told me that the Kennedys gave far fewer parties than the public thought they did, but that those they did give have been extremely well publicised. The intellectual, who was shortly to leave Downing Street for Oxbridge, commented gloomily, "I don't care how many parties the Kennedys gave. They gave more than my boss. He gives none." And any attempt to build up the Johnson White House in the image of the Kennedy White House was in fact doomed to the kind of criticism it might get in *"Mrs. Wilson's Diary"*—but much more savage criticism.

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tical or national dividends. There was nothing like the general pleasure that was given to the educated community by President Kennedy's refusal to notice that Edmund Wilson was having income tax troubles when he honoured him, or by his ostentatious reversal of the condemnation of Robert Oppenheimer. It is, of course, open to question whether it is the business of any government in any country to be so ostentatiously a patron of the arts and sciences. Don Salvador de Madariaga, at the time when Stanley Baldwin was highly recommending the novels of Mary Webb, wrote that if any Spanish Prime Minister had praised a Spanish novelist, the novelist would have challenged the Prime Minister to a duel as such political praise would only do him harm. And if President Johnson gained nothing by the rather clumsy patronage which he was induced to offer, the people he patronised gained nothing either.

BUT OF COURSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to separate the general decline of the relations of the Johnson Administration with the intellectuals (however that term is defined) without dealing with the impact of the Viet Nam War. Professor Goldman stresses, as other people have stressed, that the overwhelming triumph of President Johnson in 1964 (the greatest electoral triumph in American history) was as much a result of an overwhelming vote against Barry Goldwater as an overwhelming vote for President Johnson. But it was in part also the expression of a hope that President Johnson would carry on his increasingly liberal legislative programme, for example in the field of civil rights. But Art Buchwald, the Mr. Dooley of our day and as good a representative of "Metroamerica" as you could find, with his usual perspicacity touched what must have been an increasingly sore spot in the Johnson Administration. In the spring of 1965, he announced in his column in the *Washington Post* that he had had a nightmare: "I dreamed that we had elected Barry Goldwater and were now bombing North Viet Nam...." Viet Nam was and has been "the Spanish ulcer," to quote Napoleon about his own troubles, of the Johnson Administration, as it may be of the Nixon Administration.

This is not the place to discuss the general problem of American intervention in Viet Nam. The best case that can be made for it is made by Eugene Rostow in *To Heal and to Build*, which shook me but didn't convert me. Perhaps Professor Rostow and I agree more in a diagnosis than we do in the suggested prognosis. Professor Rostow points out that the American public after both wars forgot (for once, I shall fall back on quoting myself) "that victory does not keep," and that there must be a continuing active foreign policy, and that this must involve, from time to time, the danger or the necessity of armed action. But I am very much influenced by the scholastic doctrines that Senator Eugene McCarthy brought out in rather a minor way in his celebrated campaign of 1968. The morality of a course of action cannot be separated from the likelihood of the success of that course of action in serving the cause it professes to serve; and the price of success, even if it is attainable, can be too high. It is my conviction that the price has been too high, and it is more and more the conviction of the American academic community and of the vast body of prosperous and formally educated people to whom Professor Goldman was appealing.

How many people could truthfully say that in 1965 when the escalation of the war began to look ominous they would still have supported it if they had known it would mean four years later over half-a-million American troops in South Viet Nam? Again, educated public opinion, and perhaps most American public opinion, has been unjust to President Johnson, for it has blamed him for a problem and a dilemma for which he is only in small degree

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responsible. It struck me as curious when I spent a great deal of last year in America at a time when the absurd hostility to General de Gaulle reached pathological heights, that few people attacked General de Gaulle where he was most vulnerable in his dealings with the United States. For if there was a chance at the end of the war in 1945 of setting up a fairly unified stable non-Communist but highly nationalist state in what was the greater part of French Indo-China, the opportunity was lost by the imbecilities, or worse than imbecilities, of the General's chosen agent, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, the sailor turned monk turned sailor who ought, for the good of the United States and the world, to have stayed in his monastery. In the same way, a great deal of criticism of French rule in Indo-China was the commonplaces of American anti-imperialism as well as the more sophisticated commonplaces of Communist anti-imperialism. Nevertheless, all French governments down to 1954 failed to adjust in time to the needs of the national movement in Indo-China. And some of the problems of Indo-China are very old, including the problems of Chinese intervention, for a very long time ago the Chinese invaded what we now call Viet Nam about the time that Caesar first invaded Britain. The problem is an old one and possibly not solvable; but certainly the French did nothing to make it solvable.[9]

BUT NOT ONLY WERE the French largely responsible for leaving to the Americans a *damnosa hereditas*; others were possibly responsible for leaving another *damnosa hereditas* to President Johnson. Nearly all President Eisenhower's virtues in action were examples of inaction, and thus he prevented John Foster Dulles from undertaking the defence of the creation of what we now call South Viet Nam. He did not keep his hands off this problem completely, but by the time he left the White House there were less than a thousand American advisers at work (if that is what they were doing) in South Viet Nam. The real question of responsibility lies between President Kennedy and his successor. For when President Kennedy was shot on 22 November 1963, there were 18,000 American advisers in Viet Nam. Perhaps Hegel and Marx would have thought this was an alteration in quantity which was in fact an alteration in quality. I am inclined to share this view myself. No one knows whether Kennedy would have escalated the war, as President Johnson did. He would have had in a sense an option that President Johnson had not, because Kennedy was President in his own right, he had had the great triumph of the Cuba confrontation behind him, and, although we learn from Arthur Schlesinger Jr. that Kennedy admitted he had not devoted nearly enough thought to the Viet Nam problem, he had devoted some. But I think the best that the supporters of Kennedy's reputation can say is that with his intelligence and with his passionate interest in foreign affairs and considerable knowledge of them, he would have known how to cut his losses when President Johnson's only possible response, politically and perhaps temperamentally, was to escalate. But however that may be, there is no doubt that the academic community with increasing unanimity has made the Johnson policy of escalation the *fons et origo* of the present American disastrous involvement in South-east Asia. And since it is part of the American temperament to see everything in black and white, and to look for personal devils, President Johnson was hastily promoted to being the personal devil in this situation.[10]

Johnson was perhaps handicapped in sharing the responsibility for this, by his unwillingness (and the unwillingness of most enemies of the war in Viet Nam) to pin responsibility where it very largely lay: on the American Army. Yet it is quite obvious that the army serving in Viet Nam has not been a very efficient fighting force. I even dare to suggest that the Marines have not been a very conspicuously successful fighting force, and perhaps could not have been even had they been commanded by John Wayne. And if this involves criticism of the kind of army that Secretary McNamara prepared, this is a criticism which I think might well be made.

Probably nothing that Professor Goldman could have done could have prevented the American "intellectual" from finding in the rough and ready product of a Texas' teachers'

[9] To make it plain that I am not now displaying hindsight, I may say that in the last year of the war I and a great friend of mine, Darsie Gillie, served on a small semi-official committee to discuss the policy of the Allies towards the French Empire. We both refused to sign the document produced by the *rapporteur* which took literally Churchill's offer to restore the French Empire as it had been in 1939. We did this on the double ground that it was probably undesirable to restore the French Empire in the form which it had in 1939 and, more important, it was impossible.

[10] I had a long evening with the most eminent of the American political commentators just before he left Washington and I protested against his assertion, which I think unworthy of his sagacity, that the sole source of the Viet Nam disaster was President Johnson. I thought it obvious that no political situation as complicated as this had become, had only one villainous creator.

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college the source of so much evil and humiliation. Yet I doubt very much whether a graduate of Harvard or even of Princeton could have done much better unless the whole bases of American policy had been reconsidered, from top to bottom. And I have no reason to believe that they were being reconsidered by many of the most credulous and violent enemies of the Johnson policy. Far, far too often, as I read some of the glowing accounts of the state of North Viet Nam and of the horrors in South Viet Nam, I remembered the days of the endless stream of mendacity about the Soviet Union, and even some mendacity about Hitler's Germany which helped to muddle European intellectuals. The record of folly is not purely American or purely Johnsonian, and some of the limitations of the American academic mind are revealed not only in Professor Goldman's own attitude to these great questions of public policy, but in the attitude of his critics and his enemies. I am an academic myself, but I have seen too many great academics advocate disastrous policies, *e.g.*, John Maynard Keynes. I don't think that the worst that can be said about LBJ's presidency was his failure to win over the intellectuals. After all, President Johnson had the courage, or the power of self-criticism, to realise when his policy and his personal career had come to a dead end. I know a good many politicians (and intellectuals) who could profit by his example.

BINDER

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Writer in Residence

By Colin Wilson

WHEN I ARRIVED at the University of Washington, Seattle, as a "Visiting professor," my only fellow countryman in the same position was the poet Vernon Watkins. I had never met him, but always thought him one of the finest contemporary poets; and I looked forward to getting to know him. The evening before he was due to come to our house for supper, the Department Chairman called on us; he told us Vernon had just died of a heart attack while playing tennis. The poet's wife had apparently remarked: "America seems to be a graveyard for poets. . . ." She was thinking of their friend Dylan Thomas.

It is surprising how widely this opinion is held—often by literary people who ought to know better. Rayner Heppenstall once pointed out that Thomas' death came pretty close to suicide; he should have known enough about drink to know that eighteen straight whiskies —and the American single is close to the English double—taken in 90 minutes would kill anybody. And if he did know, the blame for his death can hardly be put on "America."

For myself, I have found America a demoralisingly pleasant country to live in. For at least ten years, it has been something of a writer's paradise, and is becoming steadily more so. I shall be surprised if, by 1980, there are still any reputable writers living in England—or on the continent, for that matter.

Look at the figures. In England in this year, 1969, the average sale of a novel in hard covers is around 5,000 copies—(and I am speaking of novels by known writers with a established audience; the unknowns are lucky to sell a thousand). This means around £600 in royalties. As the author of seven published novels, I have noticed the decline. My first novel, in 1960, sold 25,000 copies; my most recent, with better reviews and an "established" audience, has still to reach 5,000.

Paperback rights on the "average novel" sell for anything between £750 and £2,000—the latter would be an unusually high figure. The publisher of the hard-cover edition takes half of this. So on the English edition of his novel, the writer can hope to make a total of, say, £1,600 if he is lucky; less than £1,000 if there happens to be a credit squeeze. As to the paperback advance, he will receive half on signature, half on publication two years later. It is unusual for a paperback to make more than its advance.

What of American publication and foreign rights? My own experience is that my hardback sales in America have been approximately the same as in England, so that a novel may bring in between $1,500 and $2,500. But the American paperback market is harder to break into for the non-American writer. Most American novels get into paperback; probably less than one-tenth of English novels manage it in America. As to foreign rights, a book may bring an advance of £50; usually, that is all. Royalties seldom seem to follow. I suggest that the above figures hold good for most of the best-known English writers today—the ones whose names you would find in the chapter on "The English Novel in the Fifties and Sixties" in some Pelican on modern literature. It is hard—almost impossible—to live by writing in England.

ALL OF WHICH EXPLAINS why, when I set off on a lecture tour of the States in January 1966, I decided to investigate the possibilities of getting into the American academic racket. The opportunity came fairly quickly. On a freezing January day, in a small New Hampshire town, I met the writer Calder Willingham, author of *End as a Man*. I knew little about Willingham, except that his novel had made him a sudden and violent notoriety at about the time Mailer's *Naked and the Dead* appeared; for a while, Mailer and Willingham were cited as America's leading hopes for the future of the novel. Willingham is a thin, sandy-haired man with a charming southern accent and a flamboyant personality; you could not be in a room with him, no matter how large and crowded, without knowing he was there. When I met him, he was telling the story of how a nymphomaniac Hollywood agent had read his novel *Eternal Fire*, and told Willingham's agent—while the author listened over an extension—that the book should be burned and the author deprived of his manhood. The rest of the story—of how Willingham's agent was ravished at a restaurant table by the nymphomaniac—is unrepeatable here, but it had the crowd of professors' wives listening wide-eyed as they gulped their martinis.

Our host told me that Willingham had recently turned down a job as Writer in Residence at a girls' college. I mentioned this to Willingham, and within ten minutes, I had the job. He simply picked up the 'phone, got on to the college, and said: "I've got an English

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writer here—Colin Wilson"... he put his hand over the 'phone and asked me "Did you write *Hemlock and After*?"—then, back into the 'phone "Yeah, he did. He wants to be Writer in Residence there. Shall I put you on to him?" I was handed the telephone. The professor on the other end asked: "Are you married?" I said I was. "Good. Do you expect to publish anything next year?" I said I had about four books in the works. "Fine. Can you start in September? We pay $12,000 for the year and travelling expenses for you and your family, and you get a house on campus." It was as simple as that.

I have to admit the prospect cheered me. I am a peaceful, domestic sort of character, and I hate leaving my family behind when I go abroad. Besides which, a three-month American lecture tour feels like three years after the first week or so. There seem to be a great many misconceptions about these tours—partly due to Dylan Thomas, partly to Malcolm Muggeridge's highly-coloured accounts which aim to make a TV impact and miss the lights and shades. It was Thomas who said that every time he held out his hand, someone put a whisky into it, and every time he took off his trousers, he found a girl in his bed. And while there is plenty of drink to be had if you want it, the latter part is downright untrue. You are moving in and out of places much too fast; you seldom make direct contact with the students; and American college girls are not all that promiscuous. They talk about sex and think about sex, but there is an odd sort of middle-class innocence about them. They are looking for Mr. Right and the house with a swimming pool; and while most of them sleep with their boy-friends, they would regard casual sex as close to prostitution.

The financial rewards on these lecture tours are pretty low—as anyone can see by consulting the appendix to Constantine FitzGibbon's biography of Thomas. It *sounds* marvellous—to get between $500 and $750 per lecture, and do five lectures a week. Until you discover that your lecture agent takes half of your earnings. And you pay your own fares across the Atlantic, and your own hotel bills. (The agent pays your fares around the States.) And American tax takes thirty per cent of your share. So in all probability, you emerge with less than $100 per lecture. And if, like me, you find it impossible to pass a book shop or a record shop, and you are so subject to homesickness that you call your family several times a week, the profits begin to look pretty miserable. You could actually make more money by staying in England and writing one article a week for any large circulation newspaper.

What is more, you work harder for this than you have ever worked in your life. On an average day, you place a call with the motel desk to wake you at 6 o'clock to catch an 8.30 'plane from an airport fifty miles away. Around 3.30 in the afternoon, after two or three changes of 'plane, you arrive at the small mid-western town, and are met by your host, the assistant head of the English department, who tells you that a creative writing class has been waiting for you since two thirty... however, it goes on until five, so there is still time. At 5.15, he takes you to your motel, where you can get a shower and collapse on the bed for half an hour. At six, your host picks you up again, and you go to his home for a cocktail hour with "selected faculty members," which means that you are introduced to twenty people in succession, and tell each one how you like America, how long you have been here, where you've been so far and where you go to next.... At 7.15, to the house of the head of the English department for dinner with more selected faculty members. At 8.30, you lecture for an hour, rather hazy from food and drink, but aware that it doesn't matter what you say because they are listening to your English accent. (I have varying levels of accent, ranging from my natural Midland gutturals, up through BBC, and Oxford, and the John Osborne drawl, to strangulated Knightsbridge, and I turn it up or down depending on my degree of incoherence.) At 9.30, questions for half an hour or so. Then a group of students explain they are giving a party for you in somebody's downtown pad—only beer and California wine, but they'd love to go on discussing your ideas. You climb into bed finally around one thirty, and leave a call with the desk to get you up at six....

Towards the middle of the sixth week, life begins to take on an odd, grey futility, and you find yourself wondering how Beckett could be so optimistic about human existence. Then a sort of blessed trance descends, and you march through the rest of the tour like a robot, amazed that your mouth goes on saying the right things. It takes about three months back in England for the numbness to wear off.

I wasn't sure how life as a "visiting professor" would compare with this, but obviously, it could hardly be worse. And since the salary is tax free—due to a treaty—the pay is a great deal better.

We arrived at Hollins College in Virginia in early September: myself and wife, and two children, aged six and one. It looked too good

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to be true. The college is set in green, rolling countryside, with mountains in the background and the Blue Ridge Parkway—a mountain-top road that runs on for several hundreds of miles —close to the front door. The campus itself has an almost chocolate-box prettiness, all southern colonial architecture, white colonnades, emerald green lawns, immense trees. I suppose it could be described as a rich girl's college; the parents of its thousand students pay well over a million pounds (not dollars) a year to keep their girls there.

The house proved to be a roomy and pleasantly furnished bungalow on a hilltop overlooking the college buildings—part of "Faculty Row." My wife was excited about the kitchen, with a fridge large enough to stable a small horse, and a stove of a size you would only find in a hotel kitchen in England. William Golding had been a previous tenant—and Writer in Residence—and his year there had been a fortunate one. For some reason that no one—not even Golding himself—understands, his books quite suddenly caught on with American students during his year there. It must have been quite an experience—for a writer approaching fifty, with a highbrow reputation and small sales, to suddenly find himself up there with Salinger and Tolkien as the hero of the campuses. Opinions on Golding among the faculty varied from the warm to the curiously bitter; the latter may be due to an article on Hollins that Golding published in a mass circulation magazine, which paints the school as a quaint survival from pre-Civil War days, with rich, soft-voiced southern belles and the soothing swish of falling dollar bills.

I must admit that there was one thing that worried me from the time Louis Rubin (head of the English department) offered me the job. I am not more than averagely susceptible to women; but I couldn't help wondering whether being surrounded by so many specimens of teen-age girlhood wouldn't prove wearing to the nerves. I expected to feel like Mr. Bloom among a thousand Gertie Macdowells. A brief visit paid on the earlier lecture tour had proved fairly disturbing, and Louis Rubin had mentioned that I could do anything I liked except have the girls. (I enjoyed telling an apocryphal version of this story in which I replied "What, not *one*?", and he replied after reflection: "Well, perhaps just *one*.") Besides, the mini-skirt had just arrived, and the Hollins version was minnier than anything I had ever seen.

In fact, the problem doesn't arise. A girl is never more attractive than when she is alone among a crowd of boys. Conversely, she is never less attractive than when she forms part of a crowd of girls in a sort of girls' barracks. She tends to dress in a canvas skirt, ankle socks and sensible shoes, and she obviously sees herself as a unit in a female menagerie, not as a woman doing her stuff to attract males. I found, to my surprise, that a crowd of girls is no more interesting than a crowd of boys. In fact, it is possible to form a sort of flirtatious relationship with your class on this understanding—rather as you might flirt with the twelve-year-old daughter of a friend. My students used to take a certain pleasure in putting me off my lecturing stride by crossing and uncrossing their legs at crucial points, until they discovered that I tried to stare brazenly up their skirts. They then waited until I took drinks from a mug of water before crossing their knees; so I bought a mug with a glass bottom. (Actually, it was impossible to see anything but a blur through the water, but they didn't know that.)

I suspect all male lecturers have this problem, although few of them would admit it. No matter how paternal you feel about your students, it is hard to restrain the normal reflex of glancing up a skirt as the legs change position, even though you know most of the girls are wearing dreadful knee-length panties with the consistency of armour plating. One colleague told me of a dilemma in which this placed him. He was over-looking an exam, and was idly glancing at uncrossed knees, when he realised that one girl had a sheaf of papers tucked into the leg of her panty-girdle, which she could examine by casually pulling back her skirt. For half an hour, he struggled with his conscience, but ended by deciding to let it go. "There are times," he said "when it's more morally courageous to be a coward."

The mini-skirt made me focus a realisation which, I suppose, is obvious enough, but which had never struck me before. Teenage girls are naturally sentimental creatures; sex is not a physical act but a corollary of romance. They don't understand the male urge to satisfy the *will* by the act of penetration; they want to be petted and caressed, and perhaps rather adored as an incarnation of the *Ewig-weibliche*. Logically, therefore, they should go in for demureness and concealment and rosy blushes, so the male understands that sex is a long way from their thoughts. The emotion they want to arouse—particularly at seventeen—is a sort of paternal tenderness. On the other hand, the male attention has to be arrested to begin with —hence the mini-skirt. What the mini-skirt does, of course, is to arouse a purely impersonal desire to tear it off and perform an act of rape, and this should be obvious to the dimmest female. But even the most intelligent ones prefer not to face this. So they raise the hem line until it is an eighth of an inch below the crotch, and

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then try to look as if they are posing for a Pre-Raphaelite picture of the Lady of Shalott.

Personally, I am against mini-skirts on purely logical grounds. If they don't want the bull to charge, they shouldn't wave the red flag. And if they insist on waving the flag, then males should retaliate by wearing cod-pieces, or very tight trousers padded in front with cushions, like ballet dancers. Anything for consistency.

THE TEACHING LOAD was incredibly light—about two hours a week. I was also told that I should attend "creative writing groups" two evenings a week. I explained that I didn't believe that creative writing could be taught. Louis Rubin said he didn't think so either; it was purely a question of allowing the girls to gain experience by reading their poetry aloud to a group. I said I thought the basic principle of creativity was discouragement and survival of the fittest. Then the weak ones cease to write, and the strong ones survive by making an immense effort that turns them into good writers. Encouragement is like putting fertiliser on a garden full of weeds. I attended one of the creative writing seminars, and tried to put my principle into practice. After that, Louis Rubin requested that I stay away. So I went back to my two hours a week.

Although I had seen a great deal of America —travelling five thousand miles a week on lecture tours—I'd had no chance to get the feeling of the "American way of life." If pressed to generalise after one of these lecture tours, I would probably have agreed with the views expressed in Henry Miller's *Air Conditioned Nightmare*. But actually living in the same spot, with occasional trips to other parts of the country, allowed me to sink gently into the rhythm of American life, and I found it delightful. America has simply gone farther in doing what all civilisation sets out to do: making life pleasant and convenient. At first, the sheer size of our Chevrolet station wagon (bought second-hand) worried us, until we got used to driving on excellent roads in a roomy car, and the children being able to stretch out and sleep in the back when they got tired. We drove down to Florida in November—the college didn't seem to worry if I took time off—and found American road-side cafés a revelation, after the English variety. We discovered it was not necessary to stop for lunch to get a decent meal. You went into a Howard Johnsons and asked for beef sandwishes "to go." The sandwiches—made with hot beef and gravy—came in a large box, together with plastic containers of potato salad, pickled gherkins, mustard, tomato ketchup and crisps, all thrown in free. There was also coffee in ingenious cups with a hole in the lid, so you could drink while the car was in motion without getting it up your nose. I also liked having a fridge large enough to keep several cans of beer and a couple of bottles of hock in. I liked the centrally-heated lavatory in which I could sink into a gentle state of meditation or read a chapter of *Tristram Shandy* (which I find quite unreadable off the lavatory).

It's not that I have a taste for luxury; on the contrary, I tend to be rather ascetic; and my asceticism consists in ignoring my surroundings and getting on with my work. And the more comfortable the surroundings, the easier they are to ignore.

Hollins was so comfortable that it produced a dream-like sensation. I got out of bed at a quarter to nine in the morning to drive my daughter to school—half-a-mile away. The sight of the campus in the morning never ceased to give me pleasure. Americans sometimes say that England is the greenest country in the world, but I have never seen so much continuous, luxuriant greenness as between Hollins and Washington D.C. And Hollins in the autumn is incredibly beautiful, with thousands of trees on the mountains turning every shade of red and brown. Back at home, I drank half-a-dozen cups of tea, then walked down to my office and did a couple of hours work on a novel. The moment of decision would always arrive around mid-afternoon, when I was tired of writing, for I had discovered the delights of the American supermarket. It was like having a kind of Disneyland on the doorstep. I could take the whole family, and leave my wife to wander blissfully through the drug store, grocer and delicatessen, while I wandered round the department store browsing through records, books, hardware and electrical equipment. I knew that anything we accumulated would have to be packed and sent back to England, but the hour of reckoning was a long way off. I am not comfortable unless surrounded by books, so within a few months, I had a bill for a thousand dollars at the college bookstore. I would suddenly feel nostalgia for some familiar favourite —*Seven Pillars of Wisdom* or the novels of Peacock or John Cowper Powys—and rush off searching for a copy. I could buy records with less conscience, for I could make sure I got different performances of my favourite works. It was interesting to note how I would feel a longing to hear some work that I thought I knew too well to ever want to hear it again—the Brahms symphonies, Tchaikovsky ballets, Monteverdi madrigals. I had taken a great pile of English music with me—Elgar, Delius, Warlock, Vaughan Williams, Gilbert and Sullivan

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—but it proved insufficient, and I bought every English record I could lay hands on. Although I was certainly not consciously homesick—I was finding Virginia too delightful for that—I think that perhaps an unconscious desire for continuity leads one to keep turning to the past and to one's own country.

Perhaps the most insidious thing was the greed for tools. I am not a particularly good mechanic or carpenter, but I enjoy messing about with electrical equipment and sawing bits of wood. Naturally, I had not bothered to take tools with me. I now developed a positive addiction to browsing around hardwares stores and buying things like electric drills and soldering irons and hacksaws. The American ones were always so much cheaper and better than the ones I had left behind in England—for example, the soldering iron was shaped like a gun, and achieved soldering heat in three seconds by pressing a trigger. Every time my monthly pay cheque arrived, I evaded my wife's accusing eye, and made for the hardware store.

As far as teaching was concerned, I was given a completely free hand. There are certain theoretical restrictions; you are not supposed to actually preach communism, and I heard a story of a teacher who was dismissed for asking the girls in his class how many were still virgins. (Perhaps this was the one who was asked to fill in a form that asked: "Do you wish to see the overthrow of the state by force or violence?", and he answered: "Force.") In fact, I found it necessary to give my students a solid grounding in *Das Kapital*, and nobody seemed to care. As to sex, I grasped the full extent of American academic liberalism when I finally read Calder Willingham's *Eternal Fire*. The nymphomaniac agent had been right about it. I don't think anyone nowadays can be shocked by the kind of violent obscenity to be found in De Sade or Burroughs—or *Ulysses* for that matter. But I find I can still be shocked by a "dirty book" that is obviously written purely for money, with rapes carefully interspersed with sadistic violence, incest, and voyeurism. To do Calder Willingham justice, I am convinced he was rocking with laughter as he wrote it; its courtroom scene is actually one of the most brilliant pieces of comedy in modern fiction. But unlike some of his other books, *Eternal Fire* is not literature in any sense, even bad literature. I asked one of my colleagues what he thought would have happened if Willingham had become Writer in Residence, and some parent had read *Eternal Fire*—surely it would be like discovering that Harold Robbins or Mickey Spillane is the head of the creative writing department? He said casually, "Oh, parents don't read." But I am not sure this was the answer. I think a more likely explanation is that in America, writing is still regarded as a kind of sacred calling. To be a successful writer means you have followed your sacred calling successfully, and no one has a right to question your credentials, no matter what you write.

Certainly, my own complete lack of academic qualifications didn't seem to bother anybody. When I first took my daughter to school, I had to fill in a form with some details of myself. Under "Educational Qualifications" I wrote *"High-school drop-out."* Under "Present Occupation," I wrote *"College professor."* I also noticed that when I was introduced to lecture audiences, my sponsor seldom forgot to mention that I was a high-school drop-out, perhaps to encourage his duller students. In England, professors who introduce me carefully skirt the subject, obviously afraid of embarrassing me.

In spite of my enthusiasm for the American way of life, I was aware of its darker aspects. In the morning, as I drove Sally to school, I would switch on the car radio. The nearest town to Hollins is Roanoke, a pleasant little place with a population of less than 100,000 (which I have always associated with Delius, since he taught in the nearby Roanoke College, at Danville). And every other morning, the announcer would mention that there had been a robbery at some gas station or drug store during the night. One day, a woman's body was found in a field close to the college. She was a young Catholic, helping to take a census of co-religionists. Her killer had cut her body open and stuffed her with kerosene-soaked rags, which he then set alight. She was the third victim of similar crimes in the past two years.

I drove up to a girls' school fifty miles away to lecture. The town was peaceful and extremely pretty, the college delightful, and the students full of enthusiasm. (I am not a bad lecturer when I'm on form.) As we drove away, I said to Joy: "This is the kind of place I'd like to settle in—peaceful, comfortable, with a low crime rate. . . ." She then told me that on the previous day, two youths had walked into an ice cream parlour in the town, taken the two girls behind the counter into the back room, and shot them both to death.

Later, in Seattle, the crime rate made Roanoke seem pastoral. On one single day I counted three murders mentioned in the local newspaper, and this was not unusual. There were armed robberies in our local supermarket—and

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the university quarter of the town was relatively "respectable." And shortly before I left Seattle, the police uncovered an immense conspiracy that involved dynamiting several police stations in the northern part of the town, and then robbing several banks in the central area while the police were occupied in the north. America seems to be in the middle of a permanent crime wave. With a population only four times as large as Britain's, its murder rate is sixty-six times as high.

Living on the picture-book campus at Hollins, it was hard to understand all this violence. But one day I took a walk around the Negro "village" behind the campus. Most of its inhabitants work in the college as maintenance men, cleaning women, and so on. It was worse than any slum I have seen in London or Leicester. There was a school-like building, and every window in it was smashed. The houses were rickety wooden shacks, and one was literally leaning at an angle of forty-five degrees and propped up with poles. There was no glass in any window—only cardboard or linoleum. The stench was atrocious, but this may have been because a few of them kept pigs in their back-yards. The ditches were full of broken glass, rusty sheets of galvanised tin, discarded shoes, twisted bits of perambulators, dead animals (an enormous pregnant rat among them). A professor's wife who helped run a school for the Negro children told me—what I could have guessed—that there was little furniture in any of the houses, and that they were all overcrowded. The odd thing was that some of them had TV aerials, and a great yellow Cadillac stood outside one of them. (But this is largely due, of course, to the elaborate American credit system, which means you can run up immense bills and pay them off—at high interest rates—over years.)

I wondered how it must feel for some young Negress to take a domestic job with the college and compare the lives of the faculty children with those of her own children. Or what must be the reaction of a Negro youth to the southern belles with their horseback riding and expensive cars? Hollins does not think of itself as a rich girl's college—just as a comfortable, pleasant place with good academic standards—but from the Negro point of view, its girls must seem completely pampered and decadent. And the same, no doubt, goes for visiting English writers.

As I came back from my walk, the girls were making the most of the sun, stretched out all over the grassy slope below our house, a hundred or so sunburned bodies in bright bikinis. And very clearly, there was nothing wrong with that. The contrast was a symbol of America, Scott Fitzgerald's America and Booker T. Washington's, side by side—and, unfortunately breathing down one another's necks. The crime figures ceased to be puzzling.

ONE OF THE MOST unexpected things I discovered about America is that it is so like England, so completely un-foreign. Perhaps this is because we are brought up on American films and novels and magazines. But from the writer's point of view, no two countries could be less alike, simply because England must be very nearly the worst country in the world for writers, and America probably the best. There is still a romantic *cachet* attached to the idea of being a writer in the States. And while this certainly didn't help Poe and Melville, it is at last beginning to pay off. On the simplest level, America pays its writers more. For reasons I have never been able to understand, an American publisher may be willing to offer immense sums as advances—sums like $100,000, which he cannot possibly make back on hard-cover sales unless the book stays on the best-seller list for a year. I once asked Norman Mailer—who received more than that for *The American Dream*—how it was possible to do this, and he explained that the publisher hopes for a huge profit on the paperback edition. With a little hard pushing and a half-clad girl on the cover, the paperback can sell a million, which represents about a million dollars. The profit margin is huge, and he can afford to pass on a little to the author.

Journalism can also pay a lot more in the States. It is nothing for a mass-circulation magazine to pay two or three thousand dollars for an article. A writer could live comfortably on half a dozen of these a year.

The "educational explosion," the tremendous increase in the number of colleges, offers another source of income. If a writer as unqualified as myself can be taken on as a full professor, a writer who also has a degree will obviously have no problem at all. The consequence is that some unknown poet who has published two thin volumes of verse can find himself a comfortable position as Poet in Residence on some mid-western campus, and have a level of comfort and security that would be impossible for his counterpart in England. He also gets asked to appear on TV programmes to express the Writer's views on Viet Nam and *LSD*, and attractive female students ask him if he would consider giving them private tuition in creative writing. I know two such poets, and they live the life of Riley.

There is another basic difference between the

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American literary scene and the English one: it is less centralised. If you live in London, and frequent the pubs around the BBC and Fleet Street, you will sooner or later meet every major writer, publisher and critic in England. In America, they are spread out from New York to Los Angeles. There are plenty of cliques, but their influence is necessarily small. If your novel is slaughtered in the *New York Review of Books*, it may reduce your sale with a certain audience, but you may be a best-seller in California because it was praised by the *Los Angeles Times*.

All this means the writer has a feeling of freedom of movement that he can never have in England, unless he is old and thoroughly respectable. James Drought, for example, publishes his own books. And without a single comment, adverse or otherwise, from the critical moguls, he is a best-seller on campuses. He couldn't last for a week in England.

Over here, there is a definite feeling that if a writer is serious, he cannot be successful, and if he is successful, he cannot be serious. In America, there seems to be a feeling that if a writer is serious, it is a national duty to see he makes money. So a writer who has never aimed at a large audience is likely to wake up any morning and find himself at the top of the best-seller list with Harold Robbins and James Michener. This has happened to Saul Bellow, Herbert Gold, Bernard Malamud, Katherine Anne Porter, Isaac Bashevis Singer. What is more, the critics who have made him successful do not seem to bear a grudge about it afterwards, as in England. The rare exceptions—like James Gould Cozzens—only emphasise the general rule.

I AM NOT CLAIMING that America is an ideal country for writers. There has always been plenty of back-biting and back-stabbing in the literary world, which makes it a nerve-racking existence wherever you happen to live. And academic life—where you might expect disinterestedness—is not all that much better. However, the academic creative-writer is a hybrid who gets the best of both worlds. His only problem is whether he is the kind of writer who thrives on security, or the kind who needs emotional—and financial—ups and downs. There is also the fact that the academic environment tends to sterilise and dehydrate, and a writer would be well advised to get out of it once he has stabilised his finances.

I can only say that my past two years in America have been a kind of holiday. I didn't realise how much I detested the English literary establishment until I got away from it. Culturally speaking, living in England is like living in a small village. And although you may carefully avoid reading the *New Statesman* or the posh Sunday papers, you gradually soak up the atmosphere. You feel "known" in the way you are known to your friends and family. In America, it is possible to sink into a refreshing anonymity, to forget your own identity in its size. We drove from New York to Seattle, pulling a U-Haul trailer loaded with our books, records, and other junk. It was a strange sensation, to drive for eight hours, and then look at the map, and realise we had only moved half an inch across it. It induces the Whitman frame of mind—a quite impersonal pleasure in multiplicity, in being a unit among two hundred million people, all unaware of your existence.

The anonymity is, of course, optional. When we arrived in Seattle, there was a brief rash of offers to appear on TV or radio, requests for interviews, and so on. I steered clear of most of these, as of social invitations. The consequence was that after a month, everybody—except my students—had forgotten I was there. And since we now lived so far off campus that it was inconvenient for students to visit me, life was even quieter than at Hollins. I actually wrote more than I would usually write at home. And once again, a monthly pay-cheque produced an altogether unusual sense of security.

WE CAME BACK by sea; it seemed the only practical way to transport the seven monstrous crates of accumulated household equipment. The customs were unexpectedly lenient—presumably because we had been away for two years—and let us through without paying duty. Then we came back to Cornwall, and a freezing, rainy English April, and the credit squeeze, and the domestic chaos that usually results from a long period of absence. But the old harness no longer feels so tight, since I know we could go back at any time. That is, unless all the other English writers rush there ahead of me and grab all the jobs.

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EAST & WEST

Arabian Notebook

LISBON: Since the June War I have existed in stifling normalities: Morocco, Portugal. The previous two decades I lived in *al-sharq al-'arabi al-tha'ir*: "the revolutionary"—Cairo Radio once translated it as "the revolting"—Arab East: Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt. In exile I have studied the correspondence of my favourite medieval Arab poet, Abu'l Ala, gaoled triply in poverty, chastity, and blindness. His intelligence gleams through the euphuism he shared with void contemporaries. He begins a letter to a Basrah correspondent with the statement:

"Delight abides though the vision vanishes; and longing is a fact in the breast, though the houses are ruined."

From ruined houses, from the delight whose images torment me, a letter, a summons:

> Visit us between two tempests. We no longer speak of the "Setback"; we call it frankly the "Disaster." Every discussion in Cairo, at home, in the cafés, with our children, centres on one topic: what caused the Disaster? who will lead us out of it, and in what manner?

ATHENS: My first hint of this longed-for east: *Al-Ahram*'s calligraphy. It is on sale beside the *Jerusalem Post* and *Playboy*. For ten drachmas it retails the public trial of Shems Badran, former Minister of War, and the other officers who attempted a *coup d'état* against Nasser on the night before his departure for the Khartoum Arab Summit. (In the wake of its failure came the death of Field-Marshal Amer; if this was suicide it was the first by an Egyptian leader since Cleopatra killed herself.) This is the second important trial since the Disaster. The first, in camera, condemned the air force leaders whose planes the Israelis picked off like partridges.

CAIRO: The plane loses altitude over darkening delta; towns, villages glitter, posses of glowworms. Muhammad, who was in London in June '67, meets me with his brother; both are philoprogenitive fathers. But we leave the children for the situation. A peaceful solution? Muhammad sees a small possibility: "When Israel realises she will face further conflict unless she evacuates the occupied territories. . . ." There are, he says, no marked shortages in Cairo; only minor price-rises. The "sister Arabs"—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya—are paying the gross receipts of the shut Canal in undevalued sterling. The High Dam is working.

The staff at my hotel turn out to greet me; they outnumber the guests. Though the rooms have not been changed since they were romped through by Allied officers, I prefer their bashed appearance to the good taste of the Hilton, or for that matter last night's room in the colonels' Athens: assembled too quickly, the drains stinking. This hotel works. Approximately. There are high ceilings; Edwardian ironwork. It is central.

Muhammad makes an appointment for lunch, drives on to Maadi. Feel too restless for bed, too eager to put finger to the pulse of the city I have slept more nights in than any other. The dim streets are almost empty. Brick blast-walls, piles of sandbags with oozing entrails, more than these the low-powered illumination, hint that it is, in part, wartime. Outside the Café Riche (once Greek, now Coptic) Nur hails me. He invites me inside and over a *zebeeb* (the Egyptian *araq*) introduces me to a soft-eyed writer who whispers to Nur before shaking hands with me.

"He's asking if you're American," Nur's laugh is manic. "If you were, he wouldn't know you. Nothing has changed here, not the prices, not the hypocrisy. The trial of Shems Badran and his company? A comic strip: and a good one."

I think of Eric Nemes, stateless Hungarian, descendant of the Draculas, once an habitué of this café. He would lose his temper, pounding the table, denouncing with guttural shrieks the bureaucracy which allowed him to stay, yet drove him furious. He has gone to Paris, has been creating the world's best political comic strip: *"Seraphina Chez Papa Soleil."* Its publisher, *Jeune Afrique*, is unobtainable in Cairo, though *Time* and *The Times* still hugely out-sell

DESMOND STEWART *contributed a study of Arab poetry ("The Difficult Muse") to the January 1963* ENCOUNTER. The Mamelukes, *the third volume of his trilogy,* The Sequence of Roles, *has recently been published by Chapman & Hall.*

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any Russian and Chinese equivalent. *Jeune Afrique* has Tunisian, is alleged to have, American connections.

Nur continues: "But the trials of the airmen —one was marrying off his daughter the night that Israel ordered its *Blitzkrieg*—have had repercussions. Workers at Helwan have already demonstrated. There'll be trouble if the officers who plotted against Nasser get heavier sentences."

The writer breaks in: "The air force chief got fifteen years *'habs'*: this only means detention. It can mean staying at home."

"Belly-dancers and whisky not excluded."

I ask: "Is there more freedom of discussion?"

"No one's been gaoled of late—so far as I've heard." For long periods Nur himself was in gaol; his bottom teeth, once spectacular, were left there.

Nur turns on Louis 'Awad, like himself an ex-gaolbird, but unlike him, doing well as *al-Ahram*'s literary editor. "Louis has been saying that Napoleon liberated the Arab woman. The women at the French Club in 1800: doesn't he know they were whores? They had their heads shaved when the French left."

I am between two seas as well as two storms: the athletic West, the arthritic East. In the 1870s Ethel Chennels was engaged as governess for his daughter by the westernising Khedive Ismail, Farouk's grandfather. When taking her princess to the Khedive's Bosphorus palace in summer, Miss Chennels was ordered to join her charge below deck as they passed Stamboul; defiant Miss Chennels insisted on going to the saloon to see the view. As they passed Aya Sofya shutters were winched down over the windows and she saw nothing. At Abdin the Khedive dressed his slaves in Second Empire fashions. Miss Chennels was surprised when two beautifully arrayed females, for the offence of not lowering their eyes when two male slaves passed them, were upended and whipped by eunuchs.

"Boy-children are still coddled," the writer continues. "Our population of thirty million is halved till women are free completely."

They do have equal pay, though.

AM CLEANING MY TEETH when the telephone brings the voice of Ali to my bedside. "Come and visit me at once!" A taxi takes me for two shillings to a dim-lit street near one of King Farouk's palaces. Men smoke late-night nargilas in the corner café. Ali's flat (he earns £12 a month as an electrician, his wife £8 from teaching infants) has a TV set as its focus, bought with what he saved from service in Yemen. The baby, a month old, is lying on his parents' bed, a little face brown as his father's, eyes opening, then shutting; the light is unshaded. Ali's wife and mother, both in night-dresses, bid me welcome. Ali displays the boots in which he tramped from Sinai. The officers fled in jeeps along the asphalt. Ali is sure that the planes which dropped napalm (scores of his comrades were killed while he concealed himself in sand dunes) were American. Chaos, he says, was introduced into Egyptian communications by the *Liberty*, which also broadcast confusing commands in Arabic. When he crossed the Canal, he was demobilised. He agrees with Nasser that nothing then stood between the Israelis and Cairo.

24TH: I MEET THE MINISTER for the second time; the first time had been in New York in 1962. He is modest, unboastful, a burly thought-tank. His promotion is one positive result of the disaster. He makes a slow yet practised statement.

"You are witnessing the agony of present-day Egypt. What is our enemy? what are we? Seeing an Israeli general at the Wall in skull-cap, hearing Israelis use biblical verses to claim whatever territory they covet, Arabs are touched by a dangerous possibility: to oppose Israel in the name of religion. Religious fanaticism is always latent where you have believers; Muslim fanaticism could be arrayed against Jewish."

(The telephone interrupts: there is *bey*-talk in Arabic about motor-cars, appointments.)

"There is another danger. Since we refuse to capitulate, which is what the Americans want us to do, and since America is a super-power, we need a super-power ally. Some Egyptians argue that to secure such an ally we should become Communists. But my view of Israel . . ." (More telephonic interruptions, four, one after the other, dislocate the argument . . .) "Israel is a base for the exploitation of our riches. The 42" pipeline from Elath to Ascalon: what will it carry if not oil from Muslim countries? The Zionists insist through Dr. Jarring on 'economic cooperation.' This takes a double form: negative, we must end our boycott; positive, we must accept that Israel should take its cut on our oil production and should police our wealth on behalf of America. Arabs will become like the Bantu in South Africa: servants to settlers, enjoying material welfare to a certain ceiling, in return for filling the role of servants. . . ."

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LUNCH WITH RAYMOND. His Muslim cousin, Hakeem, joins us; he works at the Suez Refinery, and in him swirl the contradictions of Egypt's agony, aided by whisky. A maelstrom of pride (the bombarded Refinery is working), of indignation (over the corruption in Amer's mameluke establishment), of protest (at the lack of seriousness in Arab society), of self-criticism (probably justified).

After lunch Raymond, whose English and French are better than his Arabic, walks me to my hotel, apologising for his cousin. "His arguments are boring because circular." Fitful sunshine reveals drab streets, much litter, pavements, once the glory of the Revolution, cracking and bulging on their cheap sand base. No gleam on brass, boot, or paintwork.

Am awakened from siesta by a collective growl. Open unpainted shutters on the street below: and a scene common in the Iraq of the 1950s, where the university I taught at was closed for three months one winter. Since 1952 Cairo has rumbled to authorised protests: for Lumumba against Belgium, against France for the Algerians. There were, it is true, hostile slogans ("No leader after you, Nahas!) at the 1966 funeral of the Wafdist leader. But that was an authorised occasion.

I creak downstairs, working the lift myself. The Nubian staff are watching from the doorway with mild astonishment. The demonstrators are males in their late 'teens or early twenties. They are orderly, if raucous. I follow, trying to identify their slogan . . . A NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. . . . Another group converges from Suliman Pasha; it is like a river joined by tributaries. They surge in the direction I had intended, towards the American University (which has not been renamed the Palestine University, as rumour had it) and the British Reading Room (once Lord Cromer's ballroom). The demonstrators carry an outsize UAR flag; a boy holds up its tail, others flaunt its head. As in Wafdist days shouting ringleaders sway and bounce on supporting shoulders.

Since in Arabic cities the telephone is never silent and offices are as gossipy as coffee-shops, I attend other demonstrations by proxy, hear different slogans: *Down with the Secret Police, Down*, even, *with Nasser*. Outside *al-Ahram*'s offices the newspaper is burnt to applause. The crowd chants "YA HAIKAL! YA DAGAL!" A favourite has no friends and the journalist who in his Byzantine way explores more truth than most is called a "charlatan" for not speaking clearly on issues where to speak clearly could cause a card-house to tumble.

A journalist of smaller income explains the rumpus.

"The double-talk—a peaceful solution and the likelihood of a new war—confuses everyone. After Dunkirk you British knew you were for it: you never imagined that Churchill might negotiate with the Axis under League of Nations auspices. At the same time people suspect that the government's enemies fare worse than the country's. They contrast the sentences on the airmen with the harsh sentences on the Muslim Brothers. Faced for the first time with student unrest, the régime must throw dust in the students' eyes, or suppress them. It cannot grant their basic wishes. How can an authoritarian regime becomes democratic when its territory is occupied? If they close the university, it will gain them breathing space. But to keep it closed, to keep the students silent, it will need the army. Can they rely on it? The Revolution has democratised the professions. Army officers have student brothers or cousins. They have the same feelings as the students, but sharpened by embarrassment. Before the 'Setback' [he uses the euphemism mockingly] an army uniform secured its wearer many advantages: double the salary of a civilian contemporary, immunity from such things as parking fines, exit visas for relatives or girl friends. Since June it has earned contempt: at least till the Navy sank the *Elath*. Most people cannot understand why we lost the war nor why it is impossible to fight again."

"The officers must know?"

"This increases their desperation. Or they agree with the theory of Prince Abdullah al-Tariqi. He argues that the Arabs should throw all they have into a counter-offensive, accepting the possibility of defeat and an extended occupation. Resistance could then be mounted from the Arab hinterland: Iraq, Sudan, North Africa. The Russians, who now urge us to give in, would be forced to help us. The Israelis would be the *colons* in a new Algeria."

The journalist hardly has the figure of a commando; but his argument cannot for that reason be discounted. Only the Arabs in the towns have pot-bellies.

I SPEND THE EVENING with Abdul Wahab al-Bayati, the Iraqi poet. During my years in Baghdad he was exiled in Moscow. So only a name to me, but a good name. He is younger

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than I had imagined, wry, calm. It does not surprise me to learn that he comes from Jebel Hamran, the fringeland between Kurds and Arabs. He loved, he says, England, on a two-month visit. His interpretation of the demonstrations: the students want more freedom, which means, more socialism.

Join Ali, late, for kebab at *mataam al-gaysh*, "the army restaurant." The picture of Marshal Amer has gone from the unmilitary walls. To my surprise kebab has become cheaper since the Disaster. Ali's explanation of the demonstrations: the students are angry with the Minister of the Interior, Shaarawi Guma, for ordering his men to fire on the Helwan workers. They were not against Nasser.

IN THE SMALL HOURS of last night the government announced a ban on all further demonstrations.

Mursy, doe-eyed Buddha of culture, regular attender of Third World conferences, jokes in a room walled with muses: bare-bosomed Terpsichore and Clio in post-Tadema poses: a sequestrated palace. "The Egyptian sense of humour? A defence against reality."

Then to a non-functioning government office where people come every moment to exchange rumours. How many wounded at Helwan? Which colleges are striking?

Muhammad and I meet for lunch in a restaurant run by Coptic ladies, under lattice-work, in a side-street. He has been attending the trial of Shems Badran, the régime's new scapegoat. Yes, Shems admitted, he supported the notion of a government acceptable to America. Only America could get the Israelis out of Sinai: the Russians couldn't. Badran spoke calmly, his thoughts in order. At one moment Hussein al-Shafei, a respected but unspectacular ally of Nasser's, the court's chairman, exclaimed: "You mean that's how the decision to prepare for war was taken? No wonder we lost it!" The judges seemed as much on trial as the former War Minister. Revelations of corruption and bungling are reported verbatim in the three Cairo dailies.

This afternoon there are barriers in the streets, diversions. There have been demonstrations in defiance of the ban. Tear-gas was used; from a side-street one glimpses bricks, broken glass. In Liberation Square, opposite the plinth built for, but never surmounted by, Khedive Ismail's statue, a cohort of helmeted police holding staves. Two stand by a blast-wall, amiable peasant youths in heavy black serge and exhausted boots. They are handed on a tin tray two glasses of *chai bil haleeb*. (In monarchist Baghdad the phrase for police-station torture was "tea with milk and cake till morning."...) The lift within is rheumatic, stops five times between ground floor and terrace; its sister lift is stranded, a fish without oxygen, beyond its normal point of ascension. I ring the doorbell. No one answers. I take a new destination and a taxi. The driver, threading his way through permitted thoroughfares, inveighs against the students with such fiery pantomime we nearly crash.

"They are wrecking our country—while the enemy's at Suez. Even if they were my relations I'd shoot them—these idiots—these people who take American money—sooner than have Moshe Dayan come and kill us all. I was in Sinai. I drove a tank. I blew it up rather than let them get it. Not so some of the officers. They ran. The airmen are traitors? You wait, the government will re-try them. What more do these students want? I left my wife and three children to go to Sinai. Why? Because Allah told me to fight. Because I was defending my friends and my country."

We have reached a tower by the Nile's western branch. Immured in a lofty flat lives a writer who combines the prestige, among Arabs, of a D. H. Lawrence and a Kingsley Martin. Ihsan Abdul Qadous, now in his late forties, was of the generation that fought the British and the Palace with equal gusto. His novel, *A Man in our House*, is again topical. It tells of a student leader who, after a demonstration, is hunted by the police. He takes refuge in the middle-class Muslim home of a fellow-student. The story brilliantly illustrates Egyptian dilemmas: the family is as much perturbed by the sexual problem of a male stranger in proximity to their nubile daughter as frightened by the danger of harbouring an outlaw. Qadous, like most Arab writers, fails to sustain his high moments. The novel passes from Defoe-like realism to the sentimentality of an Angela Brazil. He was indeed born with a feminist spoon in his mouth since his mother, Fatima Rose el-Yussef, was a leading journalist. The weekly she named after herself, is both *Punch* and *New Statesman*. Qadous used *Rose el-Yussef* as a pulpit from which to be both Miss Lonely-Hearts and political mentor. His influence on the younger generation, in particular its feminine "sector" (to use the language of socialism) was unrivalled. Qadous supported the Revolution and

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suffered from it. After the decree-law "giving the press to the people"—in other words to functionaries of the Arab Socialist Union—he was removed to an editorial post on another weekly while *Rose el-Yussef,* with catastrophic effects on its sales, was put under the direction of a former officer.

A long corridor leads to Qadous' study. It is hung with cartoons of himself. There is one dreamy portrait: the *jeune premier* of Farouk's last period. Over his desk is the lurid crucifixion of an unattractive male figure: the unknown intellectual.

He is handsomely solemn.

"The situation can be stated precisely. Our whole generation has failed. We have become a zero. Worth nothing. Another generation must repair what we have done, or not done."

The telephone rings: his two sons will be sleeping in the university with their comrades.

"What do the students want?"

Freedom. . . . He shrugs his shoulders, smiles: it is such a simple thing, and so difficult.

"Nasser?"

"I have not met him for years, but I hear he remains supremely optimistic. Supremely confident that there are no problems he cannot solve. He remains the dominating figure."

"The students follow one line more than another?"

"No, only freedom. They still have no leaders. Or no leaders known to them. The movement is spontaneous. They shout opposite slogans. It is the revolt of a generation. This is not unique. But in Egypt they feel that the old generation is uniquely guilty."

A leaflet had been pushed under his door. He reads it to me. The students' aims—or some of them. A new free parliament. Abolition of censorship. The release of arrested students. And only last: severer sentences on the negligent airmen.

MY TAXI-DRIVER WAS a prophet. General Muhammad Fowzy, Minister of War and Commander-in-Chief, has decided not to confirm the lenient sentences passed on Air-Marshal Muhammad Sidki Mahmoud and the others. There will be a new court-martial.

A tribute to Egyptian fair-mindedness: people seem shocked by the notion of a second court-martial. The educated are particularly indignant. Various motives. A dislike of lynch law: the announcement came so pat after the demonstrations. A sense that the causes of the Disaster go deeper than one man's negligence. Since the trial of Sidki was not public, rumours about it are uncheckable. According to one, Sidki claimed to have had orders from the highest not to put his planes into the air, lest this be taken as a provocative act by Israel. Shems Badran made a similar point publicly: that Nasser regarded the movement into Sinai as a *muzahara 'askariyyah,* a military demonstration. This defence acquits Nasser of warmongering; not of a monumental blunder.

IRAQ'S PURLIEUS BEGIN at Cairo Airport. The people who crowd the waiting-room could never be Egyptians: their voices are more guttural, their faces more angular. They are less of one kind; many wear the scars of the Baghdad boil. Squabbling, itchy, generous, noisy individuals loaded with things. On to the plane, besides children, will be carried (they would fight rather than pay for excess baggage) gigantic bird-cages stocked with budgerigars; a bulky lute (or *'ood*) for accompanying the plaintive Iraqi laments (or *maqamat*); the usual plastic junk bought by tourists. A slender girl struggles with a nest of occasional tables, gift-wrapped.

A one-hour delay. No explanations. We sit down again. We have, as consumers, no rights; we are lucky to travel.

The plane is now ready. The Iraqis fight to get on the gangway steps. Elbows, knees, a South American football match. The man checking our passes fights for his life. Shouts, oaths, imprecations, and one loud sigh: mine.

Yet in Baghdad, from 1948 to 1956, I spent what may have been my happiest years. I have returned to my youth. A soldier blows his nose between his fingers, without hanky. No change. The mud gas through which the plane descended turns to mud rain: khaki and beige are still the colours. Outside the Airport a huddle of cowled and agal-ringed Bedu, painted first by Jewad Saleem, then by his English wife Lorna: unchanged. A taxi-driver welcomes me. "How much?" There are still no meters. "As you wish, *ya 'aini*!" (This last phrase, "my eye," was always the Iraqi equivalent for the "dear" of the Cockney shop-assistant.) Huge rainy highways: these are new. Palm trees, dusty, metallic. We traverse what was King Feisal II Bridge. I crossed it first in October 1948, fresh from Oxford, unaware that the Babylon Hotel (the Iraqi minister of education had absent-mindedly suggested it) had become a brothel.

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The south wall has been gashed for the bridge's approach road; its untended wounds made me generalise about an Arab genius for incompleteness. The wall, twenty years later, is still wounded; the same wounds, the same incompleteness. As we reach the Tigris-side hotel the driver demands a pound. It used to be five shillings. I fight, give ten. The hotel, haunt of Mandate officials, Agatha Christie-country, is now reduced; its floors sag; its carpets threadbare; its bath, made for an imperialist, is as large as a coffin. The garden, too, looks patchy. The barman—who remembers me—tells me the hotel is now an *araq* den. Fashionable Baghdad has moved south, to the region of Abu Nawas Street, beyond Jewad's great monument to the 1958 Revolution. Hearing Girgis talk, Iraqi Christian from the border with Turkey, I suddenly remember rain in Mosul, the hooded arabanas with their giant wheels, the desolation; it returns now, the photographic sepia of the war of Gertrude Bell and T. E. Lawrence.

I WRITE THIS next morning, over coffee, by the river. The day's khaki vanished like a government; I have almost forgotten it. On a good day, nowhere is lovelier than Iraq in winter. The smell is of saturated earth; doves coo loudly in the eucalyptus; it is warm enough not to wear a jacket; yet in the evenings fires (in my day they were made with logs from first war railway sleepers) are welcome.

Abbas arrives; one of my former students who has sent me Christmas cards each December. He is twenty-five kilos bulkier than when I taught him the other Lawrence. His ironic smile has increased also. He was always an idealistic cynic. He is happily married, he tells me, with two charming daughters. We walk together to the new Iraq Museum. It is superb, worth visiting Iraq for. "But they should have remembered Miss Bell," Abbas says gallantly: also correctly. As Sumer and Babylon, Hatra and the city of the Caliphs invade the mind, Iraq throws off its Airport image, re-establishes its pervasive entity through priests with bulbous eyes and priestesses with the fierce individuality of the Mesopotamian woman. It is the best country in the Middle East for friends and poetry; the worst for politics.

A pilgrimage to the River Front Hotel, the other side of the road from the Babylon. We drink beer where every day for two months, except Fridays, I taught colloquial English to Abdul Karim Kassem. The lawn was a little fresher when he spoke of his eagerness to buy footballs for his soldiers: diffident, unknowable, the future dictator. The hotel is no longer run by Abu Jamal, proprietor when John Haylock and I lived here. He has moved to Detroit, magnet of Iraqi Christians.

IRAQ TOOK NO EFFECTIVE PART in the June War. A few of its planes were burnt on the ground at H3, one of the desert pumping stations on the oil pipeline. Reserve officers like *S* rushed into uniform, drove their own cars west, asked at H3 for their units; commanding officers shrugged their shoulders; *S* drove all round Jordan looking for someone who could tell him where to go; he found his unit finally back near H3, within rifleshot of the C.O. who had pleaded ignorance. A doctor friend volunteers at the Jordan Embassy. "If there's a war, you'll have casualties; you'll need doctors. I'm ready." He leaves his telephone number; hears nothing. Goes back again. They merely give him a card saying he'll be welcome. He finishes his examining at the university on Wednesday (the war had begun on Monday) and takes the road west to Jordan: semi-machine-gunned, has the sense of being under fire, but in Amman the war is over, he is not needed. Drives back, having done nothing. Yet the officers of the military junta boast: "You know why the Jews had to make it a *Blitzkrieg*? They were frightened what might happen if the Iraqis got there."

The Iraqis didn't get there. Iraq has not had the naked self-examination which is Egypt's agony and could become its glory. Thus more discordance, more blaming of others, more of the *nifaq* which a great Arab governor rhymed with Iraq: it means two-facedness. Dire predictions: the next thing will be a Zionist occupation of Baghdad or Damascus. Yet not a sign of confronting such a menace. *Al-Jumhuriya* headlines an appeal from Iraq to all Arab countries: close ranks against the Zionisation of Sinai, the Jolan Heights, the West Bank! No suggestion, though, that Iraq the country where the writ of the Iraq government runs (except for Kurdistan, which is *de facto* autonomous) should mobilise itself, or even equip and train one effective division. Iraq is the only substantial state of Arab Asia; its potentiality is as large as its sky. It is so badly, so chaotically, so dishonestly ruled that the visitor feels sure: if there is an "Arab future" it is in the hands of Egypt. The Iraqis might at a pinch fight a World War I battle on some hillock, by some

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palm-lined watercourse. They have not begun to envisage the warfare, based on technology and timing, which the Israeli settlers have introduced into the Middle East.

ANOTHER BABYLONIAN DAY. Abbas calls again: we are going to take a bus into the country. We walk a few steps towards South Gate. "There's a friend of mine, he has a car!" Abbas shouts to him: "Come, Hamid, and drive us round till lunchtime!"

"I am free till one," says Hamid, "when my *Frau,* who treats me as Hitler treated the British, and she is German, expects me."

But at the first grocer's shop we stop and he telephones.

"Now she is in a good mood: I am forgiven!"

So we drive through Rashid Camp south to Ctesiphon, the Persian capital at the time of the Arab conquest. Not only is the road much better than before, not only do giant pylons stride the sallow earth, not only is there a great deal of building, houses, factories, on the once pastoral or scrappy agrarian skyline; but the people we pass, the soldiers in the camp, the peasant women and children, the busloads of visiting village schoolchildren near the great ruined arch of Chosroes, all look healthier and better clad than in the '50s. In Marxist terms, the infra-structure has prospered while the superstructure is still rotten. I say this to Abbas. He smiles, relieved. He agrees that as a revenant I may notice what he, a frustrated Baghdadi, takes for granted. Hamid suggests we visit *"meshruh al-wahida,"* the Unity Scheme. We drive up to it, an irrigation project started since the Revolution. An engineer is sitting with fellahin at a table by gushing water; there is the rush of a canal. In a shed, a battery of gleaming pumps made near Lincoln push the pale brown Tigris on to the lands of 60,000 fellahin whose annual income has become around 700 dinars (a dinar is an undevalued pound) a year. Before the Revolution their subsistence level was abject penury: rags from their sheikh, inadequate food, a pittance.

After this glimpse of a changing infra-structure we eat tikka, little lumps of grilled lamb, by the Diyala, a tributary of the Tigris, a donation of Persia.

PERSIA'S cultural donation is the *Shia,* or "party of Ali." From hidden roots of persecuted fervour the *Shia* has enriched Islamic culture with warmth and art, adding to Semitic law Indo-European imagination. It is less welcome than the Diyala to Iraq's present rulers who come, for the most part, from the townships of Ramadi, Tikrit and Ana on the north-west Euphrates, within minaret call of Syria; the *Shia* dominates the lower reaches of Iraq's two big rivers. The vision of an Iraqi constitutional state (the positive side of the old régime's four decades) has splintered into factions: the Sunnite Arabs have taken over the role of the Ottoman Sunnites and dominate an unhappy and indignant *Shia* and fail to dominate the warrior Kurds. The smaller minorities opt out of the schema. Most Jews left for Israel soon after its establishment. (But a score of young Jews are still enrolled at the Engineering College.) Christians have either migrated, or hope to do so.

I spend the evening with Abdul Hassan, one of a Shüte group with plans to found a university in Kufa, the Caliph Ali's short-lived capital west of the Euphrates. "It could become the Athens of a new, more relaxed Islam; the heir of the Fatimid colleges in Cairo." We talk a lot about the *Shia* and its significance. Where it flourished or ruled even representational art flourished and contacts with the West were fecund. One theory, that it appealed to the non-Semitic dwellers under the Islamic roof-tree—the Persians, the Egyptians, the Berbers, the people in Lebanon who became Druzes—is not entirely accepted by Abdul Hassan, who thinks in more gaseous terms of "human awareness."

MY REMAINING WEEK in Baghdad I feel like a pampered parcel, passed from household to household; meet Jabra, Madhat Ali Mazloom, Rifaat and Belkis Chaderchi, Ali-Haidar al-Ribaki, Khalid Naji, names to puzzle outsiders but to me evoking Iraqi individuality. Iraqis are conformists in matters of dress and social *mores*: I remember once shocking a friend by suggesting we should take a rug to a January-bleak cinema. In ideals, reactions, feelings, they are heretics and rebels. *"Unification of thought"* —a slogan pushed by the ruling officers—is meaningless clap-trap, thank God, in such a country. On the "Setback" (more people call it this in Iraq than in Egypt) a swirl of thoughts. Israel won because it is a more liberal society. The Israelis think of their country, we think of our pocket-books. Israel won because its ally supported it ruthlessly; because our ally got the jitters. Because it is better armed. Because the Syrians sold the Jolan Heights. Because King

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Hussein feared his own people and never armed them. Because we broke our alliance with the British. Because.... Because...."But you are lucky to be going to Beirut. You are nearer the battlefield. Armed struggle by the people of Palestine should have been the way since '48. Greedy Arab régimes, insincere Arab régimes, prevented this. Now they, as well as the Israelis, are going to suffer."

BEIRUT: If Egypt has lost Sinai and Jordan Jerusalem, Lebanon has lost *Hiwar*, the leading Arabic intellectual review. It was founded and edited by Tewfik Sayigh, poet and thinker; it died in the storm over American subsidies. Those who killed it were often most eager to publish it, to accept its prizes. Tewfik, himself Palestinian in origin, offered to run *Hiwar* (certainly the best literary magazine in the Arab East) with an Arab subsidy if Kuwait or Abu Dhabi would take over from its Western patrons. Silence, no offers. He is now teaching in California.

The *Ballad of the Green Beret* plays repeatedly in a bar where the pidgin of the international "gay boy" swoops between sentimentality and bravado. The doorman at my hotel blames the tourist lag (though I arrived with about 20 other planes gorged with Bairam-enjoying Arabs from Baghdad and the Gulf) on "the Arabs." In the *Daily Star*'s social diary Peggy Johnson writes:

> An elegant black-tie dinner party at beautiful "Villa Les Horizons" the home of Mr. and Mrs. François Jabre saw the smart set turn out at a party in honour of U.S. Ambassador and Mrs. Dwight Porter. A gypsy violinist who really went wild had Zizi Angelopoulos singing at the top of his lungs, that perineal [*sic*] man-about-town Gabriel Trad hopping about, the Raymond Eddes, former President Camille Chamoun, Mrs. Jacques Tabet looking her "most" in a green Balenciaga; Belgium Ambassador Paternotte de la Vaille, the Moorhead Kennedys, the "oh so chic" Mrs. George Angelopoulos looking marvellous in a pale green crêpe and the Pierre Eddes among the 50 guests attending....

Yet behind a façade agreeable to LBJ-supporters a sense of disquiet. "Did you know that Tel-Aviv radio threatened to send a regiment of belly-dancers to occupy Beirut in less than three hours?" Even those Maronites who enjoyed Egypt's discomfiture are Arabic-speaking; as Arabs they share the humiliation of the Arab World they sometimes try to disown. Some feel that their property in South Lebanon may be threatened. With Lebanese the question of money can never be dismissed for long. They have gained Jordan's transit trade, at least while the closure of the Canal keeps Akaba inactive. This does not compensate for the pilgrims who used to come to Lebanon on their way to Arab Jerusalem. Tourists have been put off the Middle East as a whole. But Yusif, a Protestant, tells me something he finds significant: young Maronites, students not yet involved with money, feel for the first time involved in the Arab situation.

No LEBANESE CHRISTIAN is more articulately Arab than Michel Abou Jaoudé, the columnist on *Al-Nahar*. His austere hotel room looks south over the sea towards Israel.

"Nasser and the Egyptians must do something militarily—even something limited—or he, they, and we are finished. A political solution on the terms Israel offers would add political defeat to military. It is a crisis of Nasser personally and of the Arab armies. If Israel evacuates Sinai because of international pressure, the Arab soldier is permanently, indelibly disgraced. How can young Arabs enrol at military academies or take military courses? How can they embark on a career which has proved so meaningless?"

The question is important. In every Arab country the Army has long formed part of the rhetoric. An announcer would never think of referring to "the Army"; it would always be "the Heroic Army." The image of "the Heroic Arab soldier" has dimmed in the West since the days when *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was newly published. If thought of at all, associated by the young with recent defeats, by the very elderly with the Egyptian auxiliaries fighting with Churchill's Lancers at the Battle of Omdurman. But the Arabs—or more accurately the Arabised—when thinking of their ancestors think of the warriors who intermarried with Babylonians, Copts, or Canaanites. They have clear mental pictures of the captains who carried Islam from its Arabian cradle to Spain in the West and Central Asia in the East. Egyptians recall that, more recently, in the 19th century, their soldiers (under foreign officers) pushed deep into Sudan in the south, into Arabia in the south-east and up through Palestine and Syria into Anatolia in the north. (They remember less often their defeats at the hands of the Abyssinians; Tel-el Kebir, their greatest defeat of all, being political as well as military, has long been rationalised past the point where

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battle positions are relevant.) Since the second World War, military men have enjoyed power and profit thanks to this prestige of the Arab soldier.

If the regular soldier is now devalued, his place is not being taken by the gentle coffee-slurper. Through the souks in tennis shoes thrusts the leopard-suited commando, the Arab Che Guevara.

Ghassan Tueini, another Lebanese journalist of distinction, a moderate, announces: "The formation of *Fatah* is the single most significant event in the Arab World for 50 years." (The 50 years include the Balfour Declaration, the liberation of the Levant from Turkey, Egyptian Independence, the collapse of the dynasty of Muhammad Ali, the nationalisation of the Canal, the June Disaster.)

All eyes—thoughtful and enthused, Muslim and Christian, conservative and socialist—are on this organisation whose name means "Conquest," whose initials reversed signify "Movement for the Liberation of Palestine." It is recruited from Palestinians living either inside "Greater Israel" or in the Palestinian diaspora. Palestinian employees in Kuwait are obliged by local law to contribute 5% of their salaries to *Fatah*. It is civilian. Controlled by no Arab state, honoured outwardly by all, it is also feared. Its members are largely educated to secondary or university level. Its aims (my informant is an expert in electronics) are as follows: first to assert a Palestinian identity and to make this identity real to Palestinians and Israelis. "In any discussion of the Palestinian problem the two-and-a-half million Palestinians must be at the table." Second, to discourage further immigration by foreign Jews into Palestine. Third, to encourage the emigration from Palestine of those Jews unprepared to co-exist in a secular state with Arabs. Fourth, to substitute for Israel a Palestinian Republic in which Jews and Arabs will co-exist peacefully.

The Disaster has sharpened two things. First, the approach to Jews. If feelings are virulent against the Israeli leadership, there is a more general understanding of the Jewish, even the Israeli, predicament—and achievement. Yasser Arafat, the leader of *Fatah*, is quoted in an Egyptian weekly as telling a Jewish journalist; "who knows? Perhaps you'll be joining *Fatah* in the not so distant future!" Second, the approach to all existing Arab governments; their rhetoric convinces no longer.

But meanwhile the only way for the Arabs, according to *Fatah*, is armed struggle. The military arm of *Fatah* is called *al-'Asifah*: this means "Storm" or "Tempest."

EGYPT: Months have passed. A new Iraqi government has suspended thirteen corpses near Jewad Saleem's monument. I meet no one educated who approved this grisly action. An Egyptian asks me: "Would this be called 'necrophilia'?" The Israeli raid on Beirut makes people doubt, with relief, the Zionist reputation for calculating shrewdness. In Egypt there have been more demonstrations. The Jarring Mission seems as stagnant as Egyptian writing. Shop-windows exhibited the black-edged photographs of members of the Palestinian Resistance who have died in action. Everyone refers to them as martyrs; the Islamic tradition buries the man who fights for his community in the clothes he died in. Clothes in the Middle East have symbolic importance. The transition from the Middle Ages to the 19th century came when Sultan Mahmud II exchanged the graceful turban of Selim III for the fez, his flowing kaftan for braided trousers and the Stambouli frock-coat. The fez, revolutionary then, had become reactionary by 1952. Since the Revolution the square-cut lounge suit has been the uniform of progressive Arabs. Yasser Arafat is now shown on the cover of an Egyptian Weekly with Nasser: in contrast to Nasser's suit he wears a leather jacket, unpressed trousers, sneakers, and an untidy keffia. This portends a new generation, a new way of thought and action.

On the dome of a little church in Zeytun the Virgin Mary appeared last summer to a group of Muslim bus-conductors from a nearby garage. At first they thought she was a nun from the Zeytun convent bent on self-destruction. "Don't jump!" they shouted. But the figure on the dome turned and bowed to the cross, then vanished. The apparition has been seen by thousands; educated witnesses among them.

The Middle East's greetings are *Salaam* and *Shalom* but its dreams include Doomsday and Armageddon. Only the mad and the violent find this mixture undepressing; or the mad and the violent in the sane and gentle, "The crime my father committed against me," wrote the ascetic and childless Abu'l Ala, "I have committed against no one." He had the same view of life as Sophocles.

The birth-rate in the Refugee Camps is without equal.

Desmond Stewart

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LETTERS

The Scientific Conscience

YOUR March issue contains two contributions, by Sir Karl Popper and Dr. Henry Miller, on the "scientific conscience" in world affairs. May I comment specifically on the latter's claim that medical scientists have a moral duty to refuse to take part in defence research on chemical and biological warfare, and his demand that all the work at Porton Down should be declassified, as a solution to the *CBW* (Chemical/Bacteriological Warfare) problem.

Why is it that scientists so often abandon objectivity and precision of language when they write outside their own subject? This was much in evidence at the recent "teach-in" at the University here on *CBW*, in which Dr. Miller participated. And in the final section of his article under reference, he writes that "*in every country* physicians ... are engaged in measures which employ medical skills with a view to the dissemination of poison and disease as measures of warfare"; "*in every country* ... they pledge that their activities are purely defensive"; and "*in every country* there are physicians who make chemical and biological warfare their lives' work." In fact only two countries, the Super-Powers, are known to be developing an offensive *CBW* potential (and Soviet military doctrine does indeed appear to envisage its massive use on the same basis as other weapons). A few others, including Britain, undertake *CBW* research-and-training of an essentially defensive nature. It was stated categorically at Edinburgh by a Minister of the Government that this country is developing neither a *CW* nor a *BW* retaliatory capacity. Does Dr. Miller really disbelieve this, and if so on what grounds? He says:

> "Politicians' sophistry that 'our' activities are concerned entirely with defence, and everybody else's with preparation for offence, carries less than no conviction. If Porton really is no more than a public health institution devoted to protecting populations against deliberate infection, it is a serious contravention of medical ethics to deny such life-saving knowledge to any community."

I am not sure who is engaging in sophistry here. Which politicians have in fact alleged that "everybody else's" activities are concerned with *CBW* offence? Who has ever claimed that Porton is "no more than a public health institution"? It is of course a defence research establishment. And defence involves, as much in this sphere as in any other, certain things that cannot safely be made public. After all, why should we tell a potential aggressor just what work we have done on *CBW* defence, what prophylactic measures we contemplate, and where (perhaps) we are most vulnerable to attack?

It is sad to find the Vice-Chancellor of one of our major Universities indulging in such loose talk. I venture to suggest that if the problems of *C* and *BW*—mercifully still those of prevention rather than cure—are going to be solved at all, it will be (as with other arms control questions) by hard, realistic thinking aimed at the conclusion of international agreements, and not by dubious moral attitudinising.

ALEX M. GIBBS

Edinburgh

MR. GIBBS protests too much, and too parochially. The Edinburgh discussions confirmed the unreality of a distinction between defence-directed and offensive-orientated research into biological warfare: the techniques and equipment employed in vaccine production could be switched overnight to producing aerosol suspensions for bacterial dissemination. The scientist who supports such a distinction is doing no more than avow his personal faith in the pacific intentions of the politicians of his particular country, now and in the future.

In this context I write as a physician and not a Vice-Chancellor. I have no idea how far Mr. Gibbs understands that the practice of medicine is rooted in morals even though its techniques are increasingly scientific. However, if to contend that involvement in *CBW* research is contrary to medical ethics is "dubious moralising" I plead guilty—together with physicians of greater distinction in many countries throughout the world.

HENRY MILLER

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Cranston's "Marcuse"

AS AN INTERESTED READER both of Herbert Marcuse and of your journal, I turned at once to Maurice Cranston's essay in your March issue; but I read it with a growing sense of unease.

In Marcuse's case, Mr. Cranston states, exposition *means* rejection: "one has only to set forth clearly the main lines of his thinking to reveal it as being at once nugatory and dangerous." This may be so to people of a certain bias, but I hardly think it justifies the method and tone of the essay. Mr. Cranston's style throughout his exposition of Marcuse's ideas, the deft use of mocking inverted commas and the introduction of unnecessary and often distorted glosses on the terminology ("'upheaval' is presumably another word for 'revolution'," "the magic word 'transformation' is oddly like 'conversion'") all point to a fearful need to translate the quotations from Marcuse into a form in which they *must* be rejected.

This persistent undercutting of Marcuse's language eventually reveals to us that Mr. Cranston not only does not accept the ideas, but even refuses to operate on the same level of discourse. He attacks

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Marcuse's idea of surplus repression thus: "Nobody believes in surplus repression, because the word 'surplus' means, by definition, that which is in excess of what is needed." Then the specific example of Stalin (who wouldn't have agreed his repression was surplus?) is adduced to show the useless generality of the term. This argument could be used against any abstract word; theoretical categories like "basic" and "surplus" repression aren't invalidated by their hypothetical misapplication in practice by Stalin, or anyone else. Surely Marcuse, however dangerous, has a right to use abstract words to express his ideas.

Again, Marcuse uses the term "totalitarian" of both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., meaning all-embracing one-dimensional systems; this won't do because "their objectively verifiable methods of government are so different that any one word which describes them both equally well is bound to be a word that tells us very little about either." But government was only a part of what Marcuse was talking about, only an aspect of the total systematisation of life. This is too general a usage for Mr. Cranston, who wants to confine the word's application to actual régimes, on which level, of course, it *does* apply only to Russia. The distinction is clear even in a passage Mr. Cranston quotes, where Marcuse describes the populaces of the West as "one huge captive audience—captured not by a totalitarian régime" but by other means. In rejecting the plane of generality on which Marcuse elsewhere uses "totalitarian," Mr. Cranston tries to enforce an *apartheid*, a cold war of vocabulary, a frontier no word must cross; this is exactly what Marcuse is trying ideologically and verbally to transcend.

Mr. Cranston objects to Marcuse's use of vague and loaded words; the one he himself crucially depends on is "real." Marcuse stands for theory against the "realistic" premisses of such Western academic disciplines as sociology and psychology, asserting that this "realism" masks their refusal of radical general criticism of the system (the reality) within which they work. "The idea of mankind appeals to him; real men—most of them—sicken him," Mr. Cranston writes. Exactly: only "the idea of mankind" can rescue these men from the "reality" that has so sickeningly vulgarised them. Mr. Cranston borrows anti-theoretical, anti-intellectual weight from phrases like "the mind of the working man in the real world" to discredit a less immediate but ultimately far greater concern with the human possibilities lost or degraded in this "reality."

"Real" is much vaguer than "totalitarian" and "surplus," but it has the advantage of opening the door for a reduction of theory by concrete particulars. Here we pass from linguistic distortion to a method of attack I will christen visceral reduction ("Ideologists march, like soldiers, on their stomachs"). Underlying this method is the position that neither in verbal description nor in visceral reaction may *any* similarity be allowed between Russia and America, between the concentration camp and modern industrial work. Marcuse wrote of the Nazi camps as "the image, and in a sense the quintessence, of the infernal society into which we are plunged every day." He tried to generalise their significance. But for Cranston this seems a "singularly lofty attitude"; no theorising is allowed, only a gut reaction, especially in the case of "a German Jew, a blood brother" (where did that emotive term come from?). Later Marcuse is *accused* of exactly this kind of gut reaction: "Far more than his divine discontent and moral disapproval towards the inhabitants of the modern world, one is conscious of a simple disgust." Thus at different points Marcuse's "loftiness" is reduced to a lack of the right visceral response and to the presence of the wrong one; it doesn't matter as long as the level of discourse is lowered somehow. In Mr. Cranston's code of correct stomach reactions, the gas chambers (which he substitutes for Marcuse's "concentration camps") must only evoke unthinking disgust, whereas the "worker in the real world" should, he implies, evoke only sensual delight in the true sympathiser, like Bakhunin, "the Russian nobleman who adored the simple people, and detected in the honest sweat of labourers the true scent of human excellence." Disregarding the enormous difference between the two types of worker confronting Bakhunin and Marcuse, Mr. Cranston reduces both thinkers to opposed stereotypes, pinning ludicrous sentimental rubbish on the one, and then, playing on anti-German prejudice, presenting the other, our renegade Jewish blood brother, as a Nazi: "Marcuse has more German instincts, recoiling from the *Untermenschen*."

The treatment accorded to Marcuse in this article is not critical but prejudiced, in the sense that it uses every available means, from loaded paraphrase to personal insinuations of the lowest kind, to prop up its rejection-in-advance. It simply will not do.

Graham Good

Princeton University

I am afraid it is Mr. Good who is distorting words. I did not present Professor Marcuse "as a Nazi." I suggested, on the contrary, that his prejudices were akin to those of the old German upper-class *Junker*, who was often enamoured of an idealised vision of the common man, but scorned actual people of humble status as *Untermenschen*.

Mr. Good's theory of visceral reaction has nothing to do with what I said. I was concerned with morals. And I claimed (and now repeat) that the wickedness deliberately done in the Nazi concentration camps belongs to a totally different moral dimension from the evils (which doubtless exist) in modern industrial work. If Mr. Good does not understand this, nothing I can say will persuade him. But I hope other readers will see it.

I did not object to Professor Marcuse's "use of vague and loaded words." Language is full of such words, and we all have to use them. I think Professor Marcuse's use of words is careless, but the substance of my criticism was of what he said, and not the way he expressed it.

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Mr. Good is mistaken in thinking I am on the side of Western sociology and psychology against theory. If anything, I am on the side of philosophy against all the social sciences. In another sense, I am on the side of philosophy against ideology; but my argument against Professor Marcuse was not so much that he is an *idéologue*, but that he is a certain sort of *idéologue*, one who combines a dream-like view of the world with a plea for intolerance, and that if people listened to him, we should get the violence but not the utopia.

MAURICE CRANSTON

London

"Who's Afraid of Pierre Boulez?"

A Musician's Dissent — By MICHAEL GRAUBART

"... HE PLAYED UPON a wooden Box, from which came the tortured cries of *metal wires* assaulted by mere mechanical *hammers*. These were but for an instant guided by his fingers; then flew of their own volition to the wires, whose complainings were brutally cut short by felt-covered *gags* thrust against them by another part of this fearful Engine. Its very name shows its purpose, namely, to astonish by the horrid loudness and teasing smallness of its sounds: it is called the *Forte-Piano*...."

To be honest, Sir, I quote myself. No 18th-century critic would, like Mr. Henry Pleasants [ENCOUNTER, February] weaken an argument as to the aesthetic value of certain sounds and their assembly into a piece of music by dragging in the irrelevant matter of their being produced by slapping a trombone instead of a tambourine or plucking a rubber band instead of a gut string.

But then the 18th-century critic had the advantage of a set of widely accepted preconceptions about the nature and purpose of Art. Today's philosophical climate and our awareness of the relativity of cultural norms make it hard for the critic to affirm a general theory of art—let alone suppose it to be accepted—and thus to provide the logical scaffolding upon which to erect an ordered set of value judgments. This is certainly to be regretted; a reasoned thesis is stimulating whether one agrees with it or not. The consequence is that the critic is entirely dependent on a sensitive probing of his own responses to each event. It is, thus, unfortunate that Mr. Pleasants relies entirely on other people's writings.

I refer in particular to the "offering by the Focus Opera Group entitled: *Three? Avant-Garde? Operas?*" of March 1968. Had he subjected himself to this experience at first hand, instead of reading about it in the Sunday papers, he would have discovered, for instance, that it was actually entitled: *Three Avant-Garde Operas*. (Not that the title matters; but Mr. Pleasants' technique of emotive quotation, well known from its political parallels, in which minutiae like question-marks assume a vague but sinister significance, demands factual refutation. So: the questions appeared in a harmless *programme note*, because Ligeti's "Aventures" and "Nouvelles Aventures" could be counted as one work or as two; because two of the pieces—though unknown here—were several years old and well known abroad; and because none of them was an opera in the traditional meaning of that word.

He would, further, have found (not that this matters, either, but Mr. Pleasants seems unconcerned about the *effect*) that many of the sounds in the piece described in the article were *produced* conventionally: by a piano, a 'cello, and—how square can you get?—a chorus and a solo singer, though the singers were distributed around the auditorium.

He would, lastly, have discovered that the *"avant-garde"* has more faces than he recognises. It takes some two hundred years to establish with some measure of unanimity, which part of it was the *avant-garde*. The programme of the Focus Opera Group (of which I am the Musical Director) displayed a very wide range of intentions and effects. Cardew encouraged a number of performers, choosing their own aural or visual media, to become co-creators, developing their own responses to the linking factor, the visual, verbal and music-notational stimuli contained in the "Opera Book" provided by the composer, but also interacting in performance. Kagel provoked thought about the possible relationships between sound and meaning, composition and improvisation, music and action, by altering the conventional ones. Ligeti, finally, wrote precisely imagined, highly organised and exactly notated "abstract operas" (non-serial, incidentally), in which musical modernity lay in the freshness of the melodic lines, rhythms and textures, while the "text" carried further the generalisation already attempted by Boris Blacher by being written in non-verbal phonetic symbols. (To forestall the comeback of "Impoverishment": music is not less, but more valuable as an expression of feeling by not referring to a specific objective correlative; Ligeti gave his dramatic "situations" the same generality and directness of appeal by removing the linguistic-semantic aspects of the text.)

I HAVE NO AUTOMATIC BRIEF for all the manifestations of the "Serious" *avant-garde*. Nor have I

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space for a detailed refutation of each of Mr. Pleasants' points, though a few samples may be appropriate. For instance, few musicians would enjoy separating "Serious" from "Popular," but if they were forced to, few would put Offenbach and *West Side Story* on opposite sides of the fence. I know no "Serious" musician who prefers pop to jazz in general, and very few who don't enjoy and admire some jazz. A great part of the audience —the largest that Focus Opera Group, which has performed Monteverdi and Mozart as well as Kagel and Cardew, has ever attracted—at the programme discussed above consisted of the same young people seen at jazz clubs and pop events. Dr. Brün (accurately, if prosaically) denied that the heart was anatomically the seat of the emotions, not that these do not enter into the programming of a computer to carry out a composer's intentions; etc., etc. But I welcome any experience which enhances my perceptions and my self-understanding; or communicates to me someone else's perceptions; or both. I have had such experiences from many kinds of activity, both as performer and as audience. Further, if a composer gives me such an experience by means of rubber bands—or by means of a computer, a device that is more versatile than Handel's cook at working out how to achieve an effect desired by a composer when he happens not to be concerned with the details of the micro-structure—then why should I question his means for effecting that experience?

Colin Mason is exactly right and not at all pussy-footed. To say that an orange is not a bus is not to say that it is bad—only that one should not try to ride on it. By all means let us not be pussy-footed. Let us establish new theories, new criteria. Let us condemn what we then find bad; or let us leave it all alone. None of us is compelled to like it. But above all, let us *listen* to these activities, or *watch* them, or whatever is the appropriate term, before pronouncing upon them.

As for Boulez: of all *avant-garde* composers, he is the most concerned with refined sounds and precise structures. He has been influenced by Debussy (like some jazz musicians) and Webern; but also—like Messiaen (and some Pop!), but unlike the Afro-American music which (according to Mr. Pleasants) would be the only music we would tolerate if only we weren't so prejudiced—by Asian trends. Come to think of it, the Cage "school" started that way, too, under the aegis of Zen. Should Mr. Pleasants' opposition of black and white perhaps be replaced by one of grey and yellowy-brown?

Michael Graubart,
Musical Director

Focus Opera Group,
London

"Sieg Heil!"

May I add a few lines about the German Student Protest leader Hans-Jüurgen Krahl, whose name has several times appeared in the reports from Germany in your pages?

As I write, Krahl (who is a leading member of the German *S.D.S.*) is sitting in jail. He has been accused of grave disturbances of the peace and violent trespass. Together with some revolutionary comrades Krahl invaded the Frankfurt University's *"Institut für Sozialforschung"*—that cradle of their ideology—and had intended to occupy it and to "refunction" it (*umfunktionieren*). After Krahl & Co. were removed from the premises (where their old radical leaders, T. W. Adorno and Ludwig von Friedburg, lecture), Daniel Cohn-Bendit, now a student in Frankfurt, gave the Court Judge an ultimatum. If Krahl were not released by a given date, then "one" could only reckon with certain *"Aktionen."*

That was a pure and simple piece of shamelessness. What do they think they are up to, where do they think they are? In the event that a number of excited young men invaded the house of Hans-Jürgen Krahl's parents, broke up the furniture and then declared coolly that they intended to occupy the rooms for a week, I imagine that Krahl might well agree with the arrest of the intruders and an enquiry in due process.

But there is a catch. Krahl enjoys one great special privilege: he is an *S.D.S.* man and a Revolutionary. They have rules unto themselves, and a law of their own. What law, what rules, what rights? A privilege to be noisier, or cleverer, or more "independent" than others? Political aggressiveness has given way to private insolence. Krahl is to enjoy special privileges because his political friends have so resolved. Krahl should be immediately released whatever the law happens to be, because his comrades happen to hold that to be progressive justice. Not equal justice for all, but special immunities for some youthful radicals, all well-fed and well-housed, as sons of the well-placed bourgeoisie should be. And if this isn't granted to them post-haste, then they will proceed to smash windows and break up café restaurants, all right and proper according to their higher law.

I don't mean to suggest that some of the arguments of the Student Protesters are not sound, nor that some of their demonstrators are not well-meaning. But their pride and vanity, their *Hochmut*, is now betraying them. If they were ever to come to power they would exercise it in the same arrogant and arbitrary spirit. Does anybody now doubt that? They can be heard on the streets of any West German city shouting—ironically—*"Sieg Heil!"* Not even their irony can be believed any more.

Peter Härtling

Frankfurt-am-Main

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